

REDBOOK

M A G A Z I N E

NOVEMBER 25^c

50¢ in circulation

This issue's
COMPLETE
BOOK-LENGTH
NOVEL
"RECIPE FOR
MURDER"

by **VINCENT
STARRETT**



A LITERARY EVENT !
Beginning "A Few Foolish Ones"
A New Novel by Gladys Hasty Carroll
who wrote "As the Earth Turns"

R. L. Chambers



★

WHAT WHISKEY MAKES THE BEST MANHATTAN?

★



Of course, we're prejudiced. But there are thousands of Manhattan lovers who will agree with us—that the very finest Manhattan Cocktail is the one that has Four Roses Whiskey as its base.

For Four Roses has that fragrance and mellowness that give a drink the full flavor and satiny smoothness that cocktail-connoisseurs seek.

You see, there's no raw green whiskey in Four Roses. It is made today as it was in the old days—blended with the finest whiskeys, aged by Father Time himself in charred oak barrels.

It costs more to make Four

Roses this way, but the extra cost is more than justified—in taste, in bouquet, and in the absence of headaches.

Four Roses is made by Frankfort Distilleries, America's largest independent distilling organization. It comes bottled *only* in full measure packages, and sealed in the exclusive

For a smooth Manhattan

Dash Angostura Bitters
 $\frac{1}{2}$ Four Roses Whiskey $\frac{1}{2}$ Italian Vermouth
 Stir well in ice, strain into cocktail glass,
 serve with cherry.

If you like your Manhattan still dryer, substitute French Vermouth for Italian. If it's too dry for you, make it half and half, Four Roses and Italian Vermouth.

Frankfort Pack that makes tampering or adulteration impossible.

★ **FOUR
ROSES** ★

MADE BY

FRANKFORT

DISTILLERIES, INCORPORATED
 Louisville, Ky.  Baltimore, Md.

Four other famous Frankfort whiskeys

PAUL JONES

OLD OSCAR PEPPER

★ ANTIQUE ★ MEADVILLE ★

This advertisement is not intended to offer alcoholic beverages for sale in any state wherein the sale or use thereof is unlawful

What a FOOL She is!



... to make an Eyebrow so important ... and to neglect her Teeth and Gums ... to tolerate "Pink Tooth Brush"!

No one would quarrel with this woman for using every beauty art at her command. The shape of a fingertip ... the arch of an eyebrow—are all so important to true loveliness. But what is gained if dull teeth and tender gums destroy her charm!

So many women are unaware that their teeth need a hearty treatment too! So few realize the fact that "pink tooth brush" means tender gums and tender gums mean dull teeth and a clouded, unattractive smile.

Dental science explains "pink tooth brush"—and how massage and Ipana help keep gums firm and teeth bright.

Soft foods are mainly responsible

for "pink tooth brush." The coarse, fibrous foods of yesterday have given place to soft and creamy dishes that rob our gums of work and health.

Follow dental science. Massage your gums with Ipana every time you brush your teeth. Use Ipana for both purposes. The ziralol in Ipana, with the massage, aids in bringing back firmness to the gums.

And firm, healthy gums are safe not only from "pink tooth brush" but they are in little danger from gum disorders like gingivitis, pyorrhea, and Vincent's disease. Your teeth are more brilliant when your gums are in good condition. And they are safer!

Professional Opinion says:

• *By a well-known authority:*

"Modern food is too soft and does not call for a hard effort to chew it."

• *From a widely-read textbook:*

"Massage improves the health of the gums by stimulating the blood circulation. It also toughens the gums, making them more resistant to disease."

• *A famous scientist says:*

"Mouth hygiene means sound teeth and healthy gums in clean mouths."



TUNE IN "TOWN HALL TONIGHT" AND HEAR THE IPANA TROUBADOURS, WED. EVENINGS—WEAF AND ASSOCIATED N. B. C. STATIONS

IPANA
TOOTH PASTE



EDWIN BALMER, *Editor*

Associate Editors, DONALD KENNICOTT and VOLDEMAR VETLUGUIN • SID L. HYDEMAN, *Art Editor*

Next Month

WHEN the author of "All Quiet on the Western Front" writes a short story—which happens altogether too seldom—the millions of his admirers congratulate each other heartily and prepare to be thrilled. "I Dreamt Last Night" (to appear in our next issue) is the first short story written by ERICH MARIA REMARQUE in over three years. It shows his genius matured, his gift for commiseration deepened. From his forced retirement in Switzerland—no love is lost between Remarque and Herr Hitler—he watches the crazy goings-on in his native country with the distaste of an aroused patriot and the sorrow of a clear thinker. Looking back on Germany's tragic war years, he visualizes the possibility of the nightmares of the past becoming the nightmares of the future. Hence—"I Dreamt Last Night." It is a "short story" because it is written by Remarque, who believes in economy of expression. Any other writer would have written a four-hundred-page volume around the events that take place in "I Dreamt Last Night."



ERICH MARIA
REMARQUE

THE idea was in the air! Some one was going to write a novel of present-day Washington with its New Dealers and Old Dealers, doggers and debutantes, soft-spoken sirens and hard-boiled virgins. Fortunately for our readers, CORNELIUS VANDERBILT, JR., was the first to cross the tape in front of the judges' stand. "A Woman of Washington" (our complete book-length December novel) delivers more than

it promises. Not only is it a most readable romance of the Seat of the Great Experiment, but it takes us by the hand and opens for us the doors usually closed to outsiders. Packed with action, it perambulates between a swanky mansion on Massachusetts Avenue and the floor of the U. S. Senate. No one is overlooked. Everybody who is anybody in Washington appears sooner or later on the pages of "A Woman of Washington." The style of the author of "A Farewell to Fifth Avenue"—that "Uncle Tom's Cabin of the Multimillionaires"—is well known to our readers and makes gelling superlatives unnecessary.



CORNELIUS
VANDERBILT, JR.

Also in our next number: continued novels by GLADYS HASTY CARROLL (who wrote "As the Earth Turns") and ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE; short and long stories by BERNARD DE VOTO, MARY HASTINGS BRADLEY, WALTER DURANTY, CHARLES L. CLIFFORD (who wrote "Too Many Boats") and many others; special features and articles by HENDRIK VAN LOON, JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES, and others.

Watch MILDRED GILMAN, whose story "Mr. Incognito" appears in our next issue. If she is not a brilliant writer, we are an Indian Princess with a wooden leg.

REDBOOK'S NOVEL OF THE MONTH

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A COMPLETE BOOK-LENGTH NOVEL—50,000 WORDS

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The short stories and serial novels printed herein are fiction and intended as such. They do not refer to real characters or actual events.

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STARVING...yet they Dreaded the coming of the *FOOD SHIP*

FREQUENTLY emaciated and ravenously hungry, the people of St. Kilda's, the lonely island off the Scottish coast, dreaded the arrival of the supply ship from the mainland. They realized that though it brought food to the wilderness it brought also civilization's curse—the common cold. Illness and death invariably followed the rattle of the anchor chain. In the Arctic, the Eskimos had the same experience.

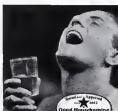
Reviewing such cold epidemics, scientific men came eventually to the belief that colds were caused by germs, not by exposure, wet feet, or drafts although these may be contributing causes.

Colds are caused by germs, they say—but by germs unlike any others previously known. Germs, if you please, that cannot be seen. Germs so small they cannot be measured except as they exert their evil effect upon the human body. Bacteriologists call them the filtrable virus because they readily pass through the most delicate bacterial filters. Using a liquid containing this mysterious virus, they have been able to produce repeatedly by inoculation, one man's cold in other men.

Under ordinary conditions, this virus enters the mouth, nose, or throat to cause the dangerous infection we call a cold. Accompanying it are certain visible germs familiar to all; the pneumococcus, for example, and the streptococcus—both dangerous. They do not cause a cold—they complicate and aggravate it.

To Fight Colds—Fight Germs

Obviously, the important part of the fight against invisible virus



and visible bacteria should take place in the mouth and throat. The cleaner and more sanitary you keep it, the less chance germs have of developing.

"The daily use of a mouthwash," says one eminent authority, "will prevent much of the sickness which is so common in the mouth, nose, and throat. Children should be taught the disinfection of the mouth and nose from their earliest years."

For oral hygiene, Listerine is ideal—so considered for more than fifty years both by the medical profession and the laity. It possesses that rare combination absent in so many mouth washes—adequate germ killing power plus complete safety. And of all mouth washes, it has the pleasantest taste.

Numerous tests under medical supervision have shown that regular twice-a-day uses of Listerine caught fewer colds and less severe colds than those who did not use it.

We will send free and postpaid a scientific treatise on the germicidal action of Listerine; also, a Booklet on Listerine uses. Write Lambert Pharmacal Company, Dept. R 11, St. Louis, Missouri.

For Colds and Sore Throat... LISTERINE... The Safe Antiseptic

Seagram's said, "Judge Crown Whiskey by this exacting test"

MAKE THIS TEST YOURSELF

This is the professional way to test whiskey. 1. Pour a little into a glass. 2. Swish around to moisten inside of glass. 3. Pour whiskey back into bottle. 4. Inhale aromas left in glass.

The aroma of Seagram's moderately priced Crown Whiskies will be mellow, warm and smooth—like that of the most expensive whiskies. The aroma of other low-priced whiskies—especially those that contain young, green whiskey—is usually harsh. *Aroma indicates quality*—as your taste will verify.

In 60 Days CROWN WHISKEY Became America's Favorite!

JUST what everyone had been looking for—a really good whiskey at a moderate price. That's the need Crown Whiskey filled. And the public itself decided it—overwhelmingly!

Crown Whiskey was presented by Seagram's not with claims—but with a definite pledge. With that pledge went an invitation for you to verify it with the test used by professional buyers to test costliest whiskies.

The wave of popularity that followed quickly made Crown Whiskey America's favorite. Behind a product that wins such popularity there must be more than accident. There must be a reason—a good reason. There is a good reason—

The House of Seagram holds the world's largest treasure of fully aged Rye and Bourbon whiskies!

The Pledge

1. That the straight whiskey in each bottle of Seagram's Crown blended whiskey is four years old, full bodied, full flavor, distilled, matured and matchlessly blended in the finest American tradition. 2. That the quality of Crown Whiskies will always be uniform because the House of Seagram owns the largest stocks of aged Rye and Bourbon whiskies in the world. 3. That no expense whatever has been spared to make Seagram's Crown Whiskies the greatest whiskey value in America.

Joseph E. Seagram & Sons



Seagram's CROWN WHISKIES

DISTILLERS SINCE 1857

Say Seagram's and be Sure

Seagram's Bottled-in-Bond Whiskies:
SEAGRAM'S "ANCIENT BOTTLE" RYE
SEAGRAM'S BOURBON
SEAGRAM'S V. O. • SEAGRAM'S "83"

Seagram's London Dry Gins:
SEAGRAM'S CELEBRATED
LONDON DRY GIN
KING ARTHUR LONDON DRY GIN

IN TUNE WITH OUR TIMES



Otto Dyar

KETTI GALLIAN

She began her career as a dressmaker in Paris, but it wasn't until she became the star of "The Ace" in London that she really began setting vagues in everything from stockings to hair-ribbons. "The Ace" was a wartime aviation play, and

Ketti Gallian was the only woman in the cast. Winnie Sheehan saw her performance. Now she has learned English and become Hollywoodized by the Fox Film Company. She will appear here first in the new picture "Marie Galante."



Lazernick

NO PLACE FOR SLEEPWALKERS

Americo's first air Pullmans are gliding through the night air these days with sleeping beauties and tired business men carefully tucked into comfortable berths thousands of feet above the ground. Here are all the comforts of home and a few more—for instance a lovely "portress" (left) to make up your bed and to reassure you when you hit an air-pocket.

(Right) Passengers boarding the winged sleeping-car for a good rest en route to wherever the roving spirit leads. Something like a nerve-test, but really about as safe as a horse and buggy used to be.



(Left) Here is the handsome exterior of one of these smooth twin-motored planes—which run from coast to coast every day for American Airlines, Incorporated.

KNEE HIGH



Lazarek

She is eighteen years old—but you would take her for three. She is Olive Brasno, the pretty little dancing and singing midget who brought down the house at Billy Rose's Music Hall with her smile and her haachie-coachie. She dances all around and all over her big partner and manager, Buster Shaver—in something of the same way that Bill Robinson dances up and down stairs and chairs. She has been seen on stages all over the country. She will continue at the Music Hall and then tour the country—stopping only now and then to pay a visit to her six-foot father.





THE
MERRY
WIDOW

Russell Bell

The immutable upward course of Jeanette MacDonald's movie path leads her next into the rôle of the famous *Merry Widow*. She is so blissfully secure in her international fame that if ever she lost favor with the public, she would get more publicity than ever—like the man who bit the dog.





WEEP
AND
HISS

(Left) New
York villain,
Robert Vivian
and (right)
heraine, Dar-
tha Duckwarth.



Vardann

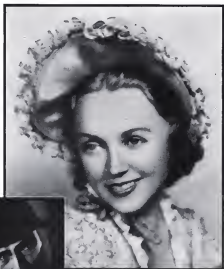
"The Drunkard, or the Fallen Saved" first opened in 1843 in New York, produced by P. T. Barnum. Then the script of the "mellerdramer" was lost until 1926. This season, starting in Hollywood, the play has been revived on 168 stages all over the country. The awful villain *Squire Gribbs* and the sweet spotless heraine *Mary Wilson* have been reborn under the auspices of producers Shrahe-Bell. Here are some of the villains and heroines.



Thomas

(Right) Milwaukee vil-
lain, Jahn Wayne.

(Left) Milwau-
kee heraine,
Kathleen Fritz.
(Right) Las
Angeles heraine,
Peg Converse.



W. Albert Martin



Maurice Stollus



W. Albert Martin

(Left) Las Angeles vil-
lain, Henry Kleinbach.



'ALF
AND 'ALF

Coll him Rudy Arliss or George Vollee. In one case his eyes respond—in the other his chin. This is what would happen if these two current world-beaters had been one.

(Right) This is neither a Republican nor a Democrat. It is a combination of characteristics of each. It smiles with a certain Mr. Mills' eyes and chews tobacco with Forgotten-man Gerner's jaw.



This gives an idea of how funny Albert Einstein would look if he had to direct Poul Whitemon's orchestra, and also how funny Whitemon would look if he had to explain relativity.



Dualities by George Willard Scott

"I love the flavor of Camels"
says Miss Evelyn Cameron Watts

AMONG THE MANY
DISTINGUISHED WOMEN WHO
PREFER CAMEL'S COSTLIEST TOBACCOS:

Mrs. Nicholas Bridle
PROVIDENCE

Miss Mary Byrd
NEW YORK

Mrs. Powell Cabot
BOSTON

Mrs. Thomas M. Carnegie, Jr.
NEW YORK

Mrs. J. Gardner Coolidge, 2nd
BOSTON

Mrs. Henry Field
NEW YORK

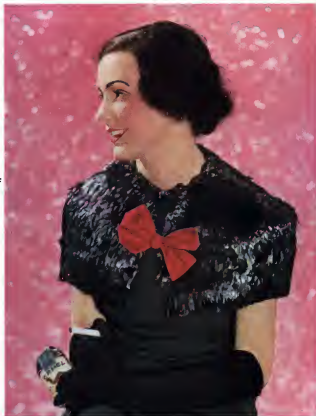
Miss Anne Gould
NEW YORK

Mrs. James Russell Lowell
NEW YORK

Mrs. Potter d'Olney Palmer
NEW YORK



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E.J. Arnold Tobacco
Company



MISS WATTS' FEATHER CAPE IS MADE OF THE PLUMAGE OF THE TROPICAL "LOPHOPHORE" BIRD

"I never get tired of the smooth Camel flavor—the last one I smoke at night tastes just as good as the first in the morning," says the charming debutante daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Harry Dorsey Watts of New York and Baltimore. "And Camels are very mild, too—even when I've smoked a lot, Camels never upset my nerves. And if I'm tired I find

that smoking a Camel seems to refresh me—gives me a 'lift' that makes me ready to start all over again."

It is true that your energy is increased by smoking a Camel. It releases your latent energy in a safe and natural way. When tired, a Camel will drive fatigue and irritability away, and never affect your nerves.

Camels are Milder!

Camels are made from finer, More Expensive Tobaccos
...Tashieh and Domestic...than any other popular brand

Only one perfume has this timeless, enduring charm



A THOUSAND perfumes have come and had their day and gone, since women first learned the magic of a subtle fragrance. And most of them have been as ephemeral as the blossoms that gave them their name. But there is one that has withstood the adventuring of time and fashion . . . one that, generation after generation, holds an undisputed place in feminine hearts.

There is no other perfume like Yardley's English Lavender; no other so clear and cool and fresh; so like a clean wind blowing. It may be worn on every occasion, even including sports. It seems at home wherever you may find it.

And until some time in a crowded, overheated theater you catch a breath of English Lavender, you will never know how truly a perfume can restore your weary soul. And some time, when you are deathly tired, lay a cloth dampened with Lavender across your forehead. And then . . . to know the last full measure of contritment, sleep upon sheets that have lain in lavender-scented linen closets. And one thing more: It is only Yardley's English Lavender that has the fresh, true fragrance of the blossoms held intact . . . a fragrance as delicately fine as other Yardley preparations us in the perfume itself.

May we send you a ruler booklet 11-R, "Complexions in the Mayfair Manner," containing the complete story of English beauty? Write to Yardley & Co., Ltd., 620 Fifth Avenue (Rockefeller Center), New York City; in London, at 33, Old Bond Street; Paris, Toronto, and Sydney.



YARDLEY'S ENGLISH LAVENDER



BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY THE
QUEEN OF ENGLAND



Yardley's English Lavender Face Powder will give your skin the velvet smoothness, the perfect finish you have admired in the English gentlewoman. In seven shades, including English Peach, and Gypsy (a radiant sun-glow shade). \$1.10

Yardley's English Complexion Cream in its charming ivory-tinted pot, and Yardley's English Lavender. The cream, \$1.10. The Lavender, \$1.10 to \$15. The size shown, \$1.10. Yardley's English Lavender Soap, used by eight generations of English gentlewomen: large size, 35 cents a tablet, or \$1 for a box of three; bath size, 55 cents; guest size, \$1.05 for a box of six, or 20¢ singly.

A Few Foolish Ones

A Masterpiece of Extraordinary Power and Realism

by Gladys Hasty Carroll

who wrote "As the Earth Turns"

with a foreword by Harry Hansen, America's Foremost Critic

Illustrated by Jerome Rozen



Decorated by C. B. Falls



IN "A Few Foolish Ones," Gladys Hasty Carroll has written a book wider in scope, deeper in meaning, than "As the Earth Turns," the novel that won her the admiration of thousands of readers. Turning once more to the soil of New England, and recalling low-roofed farmhouses of Maine with their swelling broods of children, Mrs. Carroll pictures not only one family but several, not only the fortunes of one generation but of three, showing how the men worked the soil and the women guarded the hearth, while Life made an intricate pattern out of this human material, without consulting anybody's wishes.

Birth, marriage and death, and all that lies between, is told here as it might be recorded in the yellowing pages of a family Bible: with simple dignity, with humility in the face of events, with a firm hold on the truth. The whole story becomes a chronicle of many lives, all interwoven, working out their destiny along the nine miles of York Road, in Maine; men of English, Scottish and Irish stock.

Mrs. Carroll raises a curtain on three stages of their lives: first in 1870, then in 1895, and again in 1920. When the story begins, the meeting-house is to be opened once more, and Elder James Gray is to become its minister. He looked askance at Gus Bragdon because Gus was worldly, and regretted that his sixteen-year-old daughter Sarey liked him. . . . The Lenscotts were wasteful and imprudent, and when Jeddy Lenscott's girl Keturah died in childbirth, Jeddy and his gang went on a rampage and would have burned the meeting-house but for the strong arm of Gus Bragdon. . . .

In 1895 the children of Gus and Sarey—Kate, Ben, Lovice and Jeff—are growing into maturity. Re-



Because Gus was the sixth son, no property was left him. . . . He was satisfied; he was a worker.

case of Mindwell, wife of Elder Gray; they may, all their lives, feel inferior to the strength and firm purpose of their men, as happened with Sarey Bragdon. They may be independent, like Roxanna, who lived in the Village, or self-sufficient and practical, like Kate, the daughter of Gus Bragdon, who could not tolerate instability and infirmity in her lover. That the same family could produce Mindwell Gray and Lovice Bragdon merely proved the richness and the variety of Life's patterns; and that weak men could become strong because of their women, was also one of the tricks that Life had up its sleeve.

Generous in her attitude toward human frailty and expert in portraying a large gallery of real American types, Gladys Hasty Carroll writes a rich story of life on this American land.

—Harry Hansen.



Sarey



IN 1870, York Road ran rich with life, the whole nine miles of it terming, from the salt marsh up Grou'nt Hill and along the flats to Claypit, down into the sands past the school building, over Dockham's Bridge and by the Selden Hill Dam, up Rolling Rock Hill and around the turn past Captain's Eddy and the blind lane leading only to Mount Assahenbeduc, then on to Nubble Point, where the meeting-house stood. Neither of its outlets was much used; neither that, at one end, where it joined the highway to the heach, to deep-sea fishing and 'longshore lobstering, nor that at the other where it merged with the road to Derwich Village, inland center connected by river with European and Oriental waters. This, though Maine, was neither a fishing nor a shipping community. The settlers were farming people, of sound English, Scotch and Irish yeoman stock; and York Road kept itself to itself.

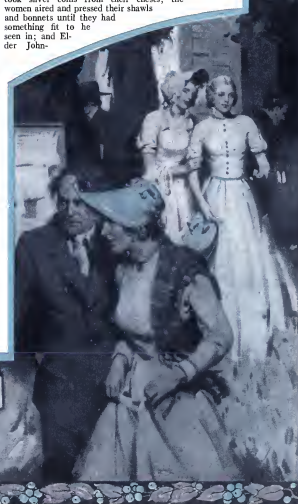
Broad, low houses with small, woodbine-covered windows poured smoke from central chimneys at noonday and flickered with candlelight at night. All day the maple-shaded yards were bright with children, hens, sheep, calves and fenced-in flower-gardens. Barns were full of cattle and hay and grain and harnesses. Tilled ground neighbored tilled ground with only walls of round field-stones between. Bragdons, Grays and Lenscotts lived here, digging and driving, laughing and shouting, feeling afraid, glad, proud, eager, lazy; knitting, pounding, haking their bread; finding themselves in love; hearing their children with outcry; singing and praying and dying; the Blaines, Joys and Dockhams, Al lens, Cheney and Shoreys, Seldens and Elys and Hamiltons.

Many must cross the Road in going from their houses to their barns; the cattle fed beside it all summer, children on their way home from school strewed it with ragweed seed. Men walked here behind oxen, girls going berrying, dogs chasing rabbits, babies creeping abroad; Aunt Let Ely to bring another Lenscott into the world; a young man hauling lumber for a new house; an old woman being carried to the edge of the woods to be laid beside her husband; horse-dicks gliding over the snow with loads of crackers, tea, sugar and salt cod for Asa Cheney, who kept store. Up and down, back and forth over the

Road went the feet of the Bragdons, Grays and Lenscotts, Blaines, Joys and Dockhams, and the rest. To glance out from a back kitchen window was ever to rest the eye upon a stretch of field and the deep woods from which it had been stolen, and thereafter continually battled for against its natural master; but no one looked long toward the Road without seeing life. Even when for a brief space nothing passed, there remained in the sunsho a kind of pulsing left by what had already gone. . . .

In the summer of this year religion took the Road. First, Evangelist J. S. Johnson came walking through from Derwich Village to the heach, and stopped in at several places to talk and pray, learning that the meeting-house had fallen into disuse through the interpenance and lack of interest of its members. A week later he came again, this time with his wife, who had a big voice for singing. They ate and slept at the Grays' and at the Dockhams' by turns; and there were services every night in the church. The dutiful old and the curious young went to hear him; the men took silver coins from their chests; the women aired and pressed their shawls and bonnets until they had something fit to be seen in; and Elder John-

Roxanna and Sorey set out sedately, to be met by two or more of the young fellows who sat on the fence.



son brought them all to their knees. The old recalled, sometimes with sobs, what the Lord had done for them in the past. The young thought less of dancing the soles off their boots, and more of baptism. York Road underwent a Reformation; and Elder Johnson, leaving, pronounced the remnants of the old church society qualified to organize a new.

A proper notice duly appeared, attested copies of it posted for seven days in public and conspicuous places, one on the schoolhouse door, and one on a board nailed to the elm tree beside the meeting-house.

Notice

Derwick, July 27, 1870

to the members of the Temple Christian Society:
You are hereby notified and legally warned to Assemble at the Meeting house at Nubble Point on Tuesday, the third day of August A. D. 1870, at seven of the clock in the evening, then and there to act upon the articles to wit:

1st To Choose a Moderator to preside at said meeting.

2nd To Choose a Standing Committe.

3rd To see what Acaction the Society will take in regard to hiring a minister to

preach the Gospel at Nubble Point Meeting House.

4th To Choose all other Nessary officers and pass any other vote or votes for the benefit of said Society not contrary to law.

Given under our hands this 27 day of July in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and seventy

James Gray } Standing
Moses Dockham } Committe

"SEEMS mighty strange for goin' to meet- in' to get to be the fashion," said Roxanna Gray, sitting with her sister Sarey on the schoolhouse steps, resting for a few minutes on their way to the church, and reading the notice again.

It had been much read during its seven days. Nowhere else along the roadsides was there anything new to see. Its words spoke loud and clear through the midsummer stillness of pine-tree and oak, witch-grass and sweet-fern and yarrow. Every crease of the paper and every curl of the writing on the notice was familiar to the girls as they studied it again.

Father's prayed so long for everybody, I didn't suppose they'd even start a-prayin' for themselves," said Roxanna. She took out her handkerchief and polished her new buttoned boots, crimped the bow of her bonnet-string more saucily under her ear. "It makes a great time, though, don't it? With all the folks, it aint like just Father a-scooldin' and a-takin' on to the Lord. Old Mose Dockham, don't he make a piece of work? All he can think on is a-singin' of that pledge, now he aint been drunk himself sence he put his name to it. I lay he'll talk again tonight if 'tis a business meetin'." He's got an awful tongue in his head."

Sarey sat looking at the notice, her face lifted and turned sideways. Her bonnet was off and lay on her lap. Her hair, combed sleek and braided, was thick and honey-colored, her mouth soft and uncertain. She was sixteen, but her body remained flat and childish, her arms thin and blue-veined under the hunched material of her blue calico dress. Her eyes would have been called beautiful in a world where that word was used; large, full and purplish blue, inquiring and sorrowful.

"You aint payin' me a mite of attention,"

A merry group would surround Roxanna, but every night, for Sarey, it had been the same one—Gus.



Roxanna said. She added suddenly: "You've still got Gus Bragdon on your mind."

Every night during Elder Johnson's week of meetings, James and Mindwell Gray had driven him and his wife home, whether to their own house or to the Dockhams', proud to be one of the few along the Road who drove a horse and owned a wagon. Every night Roxanna and Sarey had set out after them on foot, sedately and alone, to be met at Assabeneduc Lane by two or more of the young fellows who had sat on the fence as the girls came down the church steps, and then hurried by a shortcut through the woods to be at the appointed place before them. Once there had been Berias Blaine for Roxanna, twice Trumann Selden, once Orrin Cheney, and twice the two Shorey boys and Amos Hamilton, making a merry group to surround her, for Roxanna was eighteen and dark, ready with her laughter and spicy in her talk, old enough to have been married a year or two, but still not promised. Every night, for Sarey of the sleek hair and soft mouth, it had been the same one, Gus, the youngest Bragdon. They were always so quiet that the others scarcely knew they were along, but still they had talked a little together, and all their words had counted, as Roxanna understood now. Last night in bed Sarey had confided to her that Gus would like it if Sarey would come to live in the new house he thought of building.

"YOU'VE still got Gus Bragdon on your mind," Roxanna said. She heaved a short impatient sigh. "Seems like I never see such a little fool. Listenin' at your age to talk of tyin' up to somebody that don't think of nothin' but what an old man might. Can't you see if you wait, you'll get where you can take a little good out of livin'? We'll be old enough to rights to have our own say about where we'll go and what we'll be a-doin' of. We want to do a little dancin', don't we? We want to git us each a piece of plaid silk and make it up, and have our hair cut short and curled. We might even light out and git us jobs down to Great Works Mill and live to a boardin'-house. Sho, Sarey, after all I've told



Gus' fist went plunging up and caught through the doorway . . . "Gus!"

you, what chances there is, and how great you're favored, I snum if you hadn't 'bout as soon as not take up with one that clips his own hair and pegs his shoes himself! Great lummockin' cutter, every step he takes, sounds like you hit the ground with a plank."

"I don't know," Sarey answered painfully, hanging her head and twisting her fingers. "Gus is most likely well enough. I aint so awful favored. Nothin' like you, now, Roxan. Taint likely anybody to Great Works would pay no attention to me." "Plague take you, Sarey!" Roxanna said, springing up. "You've got me all beat out. What do you have to be so measchin' for? Won't nobody think anything of you if you don't think nothin' of yourself."

They padded soberly through the sands, not looking at each other.

"One thing I will say!" Roxanna exclaimed as they came in sight of the meeting-house. "Father'll make it hot for you if he ever hears of this. You know what he'd say to you havin' anything to do with fellows, and what he thinks of Bragdon's folks, that's all for gettin' holt of worldly possessions. The way they do aint his way any more'n 'tis mine. He says they may be honest, but they aint pious, and nobody trades with them but gits themselves trimmed. He'll tell you that, and more besides it, if ever he hears of your goin'-on with Gus, and it'll be no skin off my back. You hark what I say, Sarey, if you go against me on this. You'll find out what 'tis to fend for yourself to home. I won't lift a finger to save you. Now you mark my words! . . . Why, Father'd sooner you'd take up with anybody on the Road but the Lenscott tribe. . . . Hello, Lovice! Aint it fine tonight?"





*Lige under the jaw . . . Lige fell
Sarey gasped. "You've killed him!"*



Sarey climbed the church steps without lifting her head, moving miserably a little behind Roxanna and Lovice Jay. Polly Selden and Adeline Cheney, who clung together and paused outside the door to finish their talk and laughter before going in. They were early. No one else had arrived, and the oil lamps had not been lit.

"Let's sit out here till the rest come," Lovice said.

They sat in the warm twilight, the four of them, and Sarey a little apart. The pink flowers of smartweed blossomed about Sarey's feet. She reached down and broke off a leaf. Yes, it was smartweed, and would sting her tongue if she bit it. Lady's-finger looked the same, except that its leaves had a dark spot in the center, and lady's-finger had no burning taste. Gus Bragdon had taught her so years before, when she first went to school, and he was one of the big boys who came to study only when it stormed so hard that he could not work in the fields or in the woods.

"They've hoth got pink blooms," Gus had said. "Where the difference is, is in the leaves."

"Did you hear about Keturah Lencott?" Adeline asked between her teeth. "Aunt Let Ely went over there this mornin'. Ma mistrusts her young one is comin' along."

"She does?" Polly whispered. "Oh, Ad, shouldn't you spouse Ket's hopin' it'll die?"

"No, I don't s'pose any such thing," snapped Roxanna. "Them Lencotts had as soon have young ones without fathers as with 'em. Don't make no difference. Mother says them Lencotts is as near to the beasts of the field as any cutters with souls could be."

"Oh, don't you imagine it's awful for her, though?" asked

Lovice, stirring self-consciously. "Havin' it, I mean? Why, she aint near so old as Sarey."

Sarey quivered, knowing well enough the trial which lay ahead of even the most virtuous married woman, and tried not to listen. The smartweed flowers made her think of thoroughwort. Pink thoroughwort was no good, Gus had told her. It was the white-blooming that his mother brewed for a spring tonic. The Grays bought their medicines from the shelves in Asa Cheney's store; but Sarey knew now from Gus that it was better and more saving for a woman to make her own.

BACK along the Road others were coming to the meeting. At the first place where a fish-peddler would call as he drove a cartload of fresh-caught haddock and clams inland in the early morning, Aaron Bragdon waited at the door for his wife Hannah to get her apron off. His square fist held the reins of the horse firmly, and he sat broad and stooped, well toward the center of the wagon seat.

"There's some as thought I shouldn't reap nothin' here' but rock and brine," thought Aaron, for his three-cornered field and trim apple orchard faced the salt marsh. "Well, I guess they won't none of my dozen young ones do no better than I've done. Unless it's Gus."

Hannah came out, hurrying, bent and worn with work, and climbed up beside him. Aaron grunted to the horse, and they drove out of the yard into the Road.

Their sons Charles and Edward, and their daughters Leteshey, Kate and Hattie, had gone on ahead. Other sons, Silas, Ruel and Albert, and two more daughters, Sarah Jane and Thirza, would be setting out with families of their own from houses here and there along the Road. Gus, too, might come, their youngest son, from his place up Assabenhedac Lane; but this was not so certain, for it looked like rain tomorrow—mares'-tails lashed the sky; and Gus was a lone hand at his haying. Only one child of Aaron and Hannah, Jefferson, their second boy, was too far away for the meeting; Jeff had come home from Gettysburg in a box.





Beside York Road was tilled ground where men walked behind oxen.



Dockhams, Allens and Cheney's, Seldens, Elys and Hamiltons crowded the way, most of them on foot, but one or two families with wagons. Enoch Blaine walked with Catherine Shorey, for they would be married after harvest, a gay couple, laughing at the gibes of those who passed them. It was new for a Blaine to have traffic on him. The Blaines were all for fiddling and dancing, running off and then coming home with taller stories to tell than a sensible man could take stock in, but well enough to hear.

Betsy Joy and her girls came out from their house, but Albert stayed behind to keep an eye on Isaac. The Joys always had a care for him, different from the Seldens, who sometimes went away for days and left Aunt Sal Peters alone in the attic, crazy as a loon, tearing off her clothes and going without shoes until she got a sliver in her foot clear to the bone. Old Isaac was quiet tonight. Those on their way to the meeting could see him peering out through the barred window of his room in the west end; sometimes he bellowed like a polecat in a trap, but tonight he was quiet; and Albert, who had stayed to watch him, sat comfortably on the door rock, lifting his hand in greeting to each passer-by.

NO one went churchward from the Lenscotts'. It was not to be expected. They stood about their two-room shack a little back from the Road, a group of men with short, thick bodies, a litter of children scrambling and squalling, a woman or two. It was a sight to make good wives hope they had locked their doors, and farmers to fear for what lay in the ground ready for the taking.

"I do love trematers," Tim Lenscott, father of the Lenscott tribe, often muttered feelingly through his whiskers. But he never grew tomatoes. It was Silas Bragdon who grew them, and soon found he could not risk leaving them to ripen on the vines. In the fall, rows of the luscious vegetables reddening on Silas's window-sills made Tim's mouth water; he sometimes stood still in the road to stare at them. "Oh, my God," he would say slowly, shaking his matted, mangy beard, "my soul and my God, I do love trematers."

Elder James and Mindwell Gray, driving their thin, hoary mare down the steep hill from their house to the Road, were figures a little apart from the rest. James was old, over seventy, and sat tall and thin with his lash-whip in his hand, his suit and tie greenish-black, his countenance hol-

low and solemn. Mindwell was young, not more than forty, with ample bosom and lap for mothering the world, but wearing on her smooth pink face a rapt expression which set her forever apart from worldly things. These were the two who had harbored the evangelist when he first came, these the two who had been faithful with desertion all about them, and spent years in praying for others not interested to pray for themselves.

"God be praised!" muttered old James as they rode. "God be praised. God be thanked. Praise be to His holy Name."

Mindwell's full throat swelled with music she hoped to pour out to the Lord before the evening should be over. He would be coming soon, she thought, would walk again upon the earth and claim His own. Mindwell came of Adventist stock. . . .

A mile and a half over Assabeneduc Lane, as Roxanna and Sarey sat by the schoolhouse talking, a young man was shoeing an ox. The beast hung patiently in his sling, his feet securely fastened to blocks, snuffing as he watched the fire which burned in the forge. The blacksmith, quiet and intent, crouched to draw a curved strip of iron from the flames, his movement slow, his hands steady in the sharp heat, his features turned livid by the light: crisp, pale hair, eyes of a thin blue like frost on a window with night beyond it, a face mild in shape and bony feature, but with an expression of powerful immobility, as if to say one might talk, but talk meant nothing; all was settled in a man's mind.

This shed, moved from one of his brothers' places, and the fine new barn, were all the buildings Gus had here as yet, but they were unusual for one not far past twenty-one, and he would build him a house when he saw the need. For himself the hay was good enough to sleep on, and the forge fire would fry a fish from the brook whenever he could not go home to his father's. Lately he went there less and less; he had his work to think of.

For the reason that Gus was the sixth son Aaron had seen to manhood, no property which Aaron had accumulated along the Road was left to be given to him. The sixth portion was the twenty-acre strip behind the Blaine pasture, land the first Bragdon settler had cleared and fenced and built his cabin on. To make it up to Gus, Aaron gave him three woodlots where the older boys had only two apiece, and none of theirs so well-grown as one of his.

Gus was satisfied. A patch good enough for the first Gus was good enough for him. In those early days



"Rest easy—I shouldn't never know ye was there!"

this whole section through to the sea was the Blaine grant, owned by men known to Charles I, gentlemen and sea-captains, with windows in their houses, china on their tables, and veils and flowers for their women when they married. The first Gus was neither gentleman nor adventurer, no acquaintance of the king, but a yeoman farmer from the north of England who paid for his passage with labor for the Blaines, then rented and later bought this strip of land. He was a worker. He knew how to clear his ground by cutting down the trees in June when fresh leaves hung to their branches, burning them early the next year when the soil was still protected by its own damp, digging up the roots to be interlaced and used for fencing. He had plowed with a wooden mattock and put in his seed at the proper season, carefully, frugally, on the right elevation, with regard for the signs which were all about him of the wetness or dryness, heat or chill lying in the months ahead. He did not dance and sing like the Blaines, nor did he live like the Lencscotts, who even then squatted on the commons roundabout, a pack of good-natured rogues and wastrels. Gus Bragdon had been a worker, as was also this other Gus, eight generations later.

HIS hands gripped the ox's foreleg. His hammer drove nails with quick, firm blows. His shears shipped away, unhesitating, a border of hoof. "Ye'll do," he said at last. "Down with ye."

The blocks were removed. The sling slid low on its pulleys. The ox stepped out gingerly and plodded away to his stall beside his mate, next to the cows. Hay came into the row of mangers by the fockfals. Creatures never went hungry in a Bragdon barn, nor cold, nor dirty, nor sick; do without fondling they might, and did, and work hard by day, but at night they took their ease. It was so in Bragdon houses, as well as in Bragdon barns.

Gus stripped to his underwear and boots and washed in water the oxen had left from their drinking. His hands plunged deep, and he flung the water over his face and neck down to where brown skin met the white, cleaning his ears with his forefingers and slicking his hair smooth. A blue suit, a light shirt and a plaid scarf tie hung waiting in the harness closet. He put them on with thick fingers, and stepped about rather as the ox had done in his new shoes, but starting out across his land, soon forgot what he wore.

These were his twenty acres: his rise of ground, fit place to put a house; his meadow and pasture, his brook and walnut-grove and big red oaks. A strip bounded on the west by a marsh and on the east by a river. As things were, he must cross the river by footbridge in summer, on the ice in winter, and by raft in the high-water months; but some day he would have more than a right-of-way across the Blaine pasture. Some



"Sarey, you've got Gus Bragdon on your mind," Roxanna said. . . .
"Father'll make it hot for you if he ever hears of this!"

day he would own from here to York Road. This winter he would work at the Navy Yard, boarding with his mother, and walking the five miles to and from Kittery night and morning, passing his own place to do the chores. Wages were paid in money at the Yard. Gus often worked there in the quiet months, earning a few years ago the cost of schoolbooks and flannel shirts, now that of brick and nails and the milling of lumber with which to build a house. . . .

"Evening, Gus. Nice evening."

It was Thoe Blaine's voice. Gus could scarcely see him for the dark, but he was now at the end of the lane, passing the Blaine place, the only two-story house along the Road. He knew the gentle, smiling Blaine voice, and the Blaine step, deliberate but neat, on the spongy turf.

"Yeus. Fine."

"Stop in on your way back. We'll have some music, like enough." (Please turn to page 99)



There are smiles: F. D. R., his son James, Jim Farley and other friends on election night.



HOOVER OFF

The Two Weeks that shook the United States

THERE were many newspaper stories and magazine articles that sometimes made Mr. Hoover laugh and sometimes made him wonder where the writers could have obtained their information. One particularly attracted his attention. It was an article printed in a publication to the effect that, as a result of the depression, his personal fortune had dwindled from four million dollars to seven hundred thousand dollars. I found him reading it one afternoon. He looked up, and with a smile said:

"Well, Ted, for your information, this statement is entirely erroneous. It is a waste of time reading it. Let's get down to business."

The "Smearing" Campaign

The "smearing" when it began, was as difficult as anything could be, to take without fighting back. But a President often must suffer in silence. The hardest of all was when scurrilous books, viciously untrue, were published about him. But again a President does not have the recourse that a private citizen has, or rather, can hardly avail himself of the recourse. Take the following at its full value: he considered the authors of some of these books as the scum of the earth.

Reports about the books were brought to him by friends who were incensed over the injustice done him. He would not even look at the publications.

"I will not degrade myself by reading that kind of trash," he said. "But there ought to be some way to prevent the circulation of such slanders as you say are in the book. A President ought not to be subjected to such unfounded vilification."

"T-e-m-p-o-r-a-r-i-l-y Great"

THE President had his acceptance address to write. He had a dozen major appointments to make, including a new head of the R.F.C. and of the Federal Home Loan Bank Board. He had to keep a watchful eye on the activities of his Democratic opponent for the Presidency, and meet

attacks with counter-attacks. He had to bolster the reconstruction activities in behalf of industry and agriculture. He had to initiate governmental economies that the executive departments could make voluntarily, below the actual budget-appropriations.

The hours at the Executive Offices were as long and arduous as when Congress was in session. The entire White House staff was "punch-drunk" with work. Although Mr. Hoover worked harder than any other of us, he was able to stand the strain. We could hardly drag ourselves to our homes at night. None of us minded the long regular office-hours. It was when he kept right on working after six o'clock, and even after seven o'clock, before the brief dinner interlude prior to beginning his night activities, that we fretted. It seemed as though he would never go over to the house and give us a respite before turning to night duties.

I often was reminded of an incident that Rudolph Forster delighted in recounting, about Archie Butt's rage because the late President Roosevelt held him at the White House when he had more pleasing if not more important engagements elsewhere.

Archie was particularly upset one evening when he wanted to get away early. As T. R. stayed on and on, the aide became the more disturbed, storming about the office adjoining that of the President, and telling all and sundry exactly what he thought of the man inside. T. R. appeared unexpectedly. He took in the situation at a glance. He clapped Archie on the shoulder, and with a hoisterous laugh, said:

"Archie, there is no fun in cooling one's heels in the antechambers of the temporarily great." With the emphasis on "t-e-m-p-o-r-a-r-i-l-y" that only T. R. could place.

President Hoover wanted a leeway of thirty days between the adjournment of Congress and the holding of the notification ceremonies, so he could have time in which to write the pronouncement. Because of the delay in ending the session, he allowed himself only three weeks. Nevertheless the address was the best he had ever prepared. It was his own from beginning to end, revised only to the extent that he accepted a very few of the many



Emil Hurja, Jim Farley's Man Friday and star-gazer, who predicted the results of 1932 elections as far back as late fall, 1931.



In ten minutes one became President, and the other went back to California and privacy.

THE RECORD

by Theo. G. Joslin, *Secretary to Mr. Hoover 1931-1933*

suggestions others made to him. Those about him offered to help him in any way possible as he began the task. His reply was:

"You might list the subjects you think I should deal with. But I guess that is all you or anyone else can do. This address is going to be my own from beginning to end. It must be in my own language. I have a style of my own, and it is most effective when I use it. The record has been made. I am going to discuss it. I am going to stand on it. I know what to say, and I will state it in my own way."

When the original draft was completed, he distributed copies among those most intimately associated with him, requesting any comment that they might have to make. All were agreed it was the beginning of a fine effort; but each had changes to suggest. In fact, so many changes were urged, that he was provoked.

"If I should follow the advice of each one of you who has read these proofs," he said, "there would not be one sentence of mine left in the address. I am going to take such advice as I want, and disregard the rest; and all of you can jump in the lake so far as I am concerned, if you don't like it."

Doing His Own Financing

SAFELY back in the White House after his first campaign trip, the President was subjected to a bombardment to induce him to go on the stump continuously until election-day. Nearly everyone began by saying it was imperative that he make "a swing around the circle," dash up to New York and into New England, run down into the South and then make a spectacular drive across the continent to his home in Palo Alto to vote on election-day.

The reason for the pressure was the most favorable response to his Des Moines trip. He had accomplished more during those three days than all the party-workers had been able to do since the campaign started. He had somewhat lessened the effect of Governor Roosevelt's first trip. Normally Republican voters who had gone over to the opposition were coming back into the fold. Evidence of

this came in the form of letters to the White House, and to the National Committee headquarters. But the party managers knew a whole lot more was needed if Mr. Hoover was to be reelected.

At this time the President gave me the most graphic description of the difficulty confronting him that I had heard from anyone.

"I'll tell you what our trouble is," he said. "We are opposed by six million unemployed, ten thousand bonus-marchers, and ten-cent corn. Is it any wonder that the prospects are dark? Is there any cause for surprise that we must give every ounce of strength, every one of us, to win?"

And then came a staggering blow from behind, necessitating action never before disclosed. The Republican National Committee could not get enough money to continue the campaign. It was worse than "broke." It was already facing a two-hundred-thousand-dollar deficit. Those who had money and ordinarily contributed freely, thought the Republican party was whipped. They would not come through with a dollar. No argument could influence them. Some were the rankest kind of quitters.

Therefore, with the campaign at its height, Chairman Sanders had to consider making an immediate cut in the staff. The committee did not have enough cash on hand even to pay for broadcasting the President's speech from Detroit the following Saturday night.

The President had to drop everything and take personal charge of the work of getting enough money together to carry on the most essential campaign activities until election-day. This he did at the expense of time he should have been giving to the speeches he had to deliver. He managed it somehow, as he managed everything he tackled. In a most difficult situation, he not only had to do his own campaign, he had to do his own financing.



Senator Carter Glass, who "had a speech in his system," and got out of a sickbed to make the speech of the campaign.

The Victory to Him Who Lost!

FOR months before the election, mine had been an eighteen-hour day. That was the schedule for everyone around the President. The incessant activity during the campaign had culminated in



Herbert Hoover bids his adieu to the four years of heartbreaks. The train had started none too soon for him.

thirty-six hours of continuous work. I had retired at eleven o'clock the night following election-day. Sleep came instantly. Then something disturbed me. For a moment I did not know what it was. When I awakened sufficiently to know where I was, I realized the official telephone was ringing uninterruptedly. I removed the receiver, and the night operator at the White House said:

"It's the President, from Palo Alto. I have been pressing on your bell for ten minutes. You must wake up, Mr. Secretary."

I was still drunk with sleep when Mr. Hoover came on the line. I had to ask him to wait a minute. It was one o'clock here, but only ten o'clock in California. The difference in time evidently dawned on him at that moment, for he said at once:

"Ted, I'm sorry. Here I am doing what I have criticized so many others for doing in the past. I'll bang up, or if you are awake enough now, we will talk, as long as I have been so inconsiderate."

I told him to go ahead. You may wonder what occasioned the call. He was thinking of the needs of the country that had decided, through a majority of the voters who had gone to the polls, that it wanted another man as its President. He knew of problems confronting the nation of which neither the people nor the incoming administration could be aware. He was evolving a plan to invite the President-elect to meet him in Washington and discuss those problems.

This government, for example, was confronted by the British and French debt crisis. Day by day the President had consulted with Secretaries Stimson and Mills about the subject when in Washington, and over the long-distance telephone when away from the capital. Effective action thereon, requiring international negotiations, could not be taken during the campaign, for obvious reasons.

But with the campaign over, there was the possibility of an agreement being reached.

Mr. Hoover realized the necessity of cooperation with the incoming administration if there was to be constructive accomplishment. It would be in keeping with the cooperative program he had consistently forwarded with the Congress. He wanted to pursue it. If Mr. Roosevelt would join with him, the problems could be solved before March 4.

Simultaneously sections of the press began speculating about the possibility that the President might resign, so that the incoming administration could take charge of the nation's affairs at once. Anyone with a grain of gray matter should have known that the last thing the President-elect would want, would be to have the conglomeration of problems of a depression-stricken nation dumped into his lap instantaneously. Mr. Roosevelt knew it. Mr. Hoover knew it.

The one had to carry on as the other prepared to assume the burden. Mr. Hoover was very definitely of the opinion, however, that if Mr. Roosevelt would join in a cooperative movement during the intervening months, inestimable good could be accomplished. Without such cooperation, all the problems would confront Mr. Roosevelt upon his induction into office.

This was the subject he talked with me about over the telephone. He decided the following day that he would make the overture. Thereafter his telegraphic invitation to his successor went forward. Instead of resting in California from his arduous labors, he started back to Washington at once.

He made no mention of the election after his return. Again, it was something of the past. His thoughts were of the future. He held nineteen conferences the day he got back. Most of the conversations had to do with business of an official character, requiring immediate attention. A few of the callers came to express their regret. That did not go with him.

"I wonder," he said to one of them, "if you have not a misconception of the election. It was an event in which, so far as the personal side is concerned, the victory was to him who lost, and the defeat to him who won. I can say that never in the last fifteen years have I had the peace of mind that I have had since the election. I have almost a feeling of elation. My only concern is what will happen to the country as a result of the change in policies."

The Baby on the Doorstep

TO reassure business was a prime requisite. Mr. Hoover feared what the next few months would bring. The full force of the depression had been spent. Real recovery had begun in July, immediately after the adjournment of Congress. But it now showed signs of going back. I had definite information before election-day that in September and October orders totaling several hundred million dollars had been placed, subject to the election. If Mr. Hoover were returned to office, the orders would become immediately effective. If he were defeated, cancellation of the contracts was optional. And every last one of those contracts was canceled! Business and industry were going to take no chances until they found out what Mr. Roosevelt would do in the way of experiment.

"The next four months," President Hoover said to me, "threaten to be all that I predicted in the campaign they would be. We are laboring under a terrific handicap, whatever we undertake. I can recommend plans for the benefit of the country. This

I shall do. I cannot do more, however. And I cannot do all that I would have done if I had been reelected. For example, I cannot go ahead with the agricultural relief program I had proposed in the campaign, beneficial though it would be." (As a matter of fact, conditions later got so bad that he risked it.) "It would not get anywhere. It would merely be attacked. It would accomplish no constructive purpose to make a proposal, knowing it would only be attacked. This country has been placed by the election in a much more serious condition than the people realize. It is close to being a mess."

"By the way, it does seem now as though the vital problems of the times can be taken up in keeping with their relative importance. It seems as though now, if never before, the White House should not be used as a sounding-board for all sorts of projects. Whatever their importance, I have got to take up the matters of the greatest consequence to the American people."

That was the policy he pursued, with his confer-



Senator Huey P. Long, who was the first to stumble upon the idea of declaring a "banking holiday" in the State of Louisiana.

ence of November 22, 1932, with the President-elect heading the list. That was the first time the President heading one political party and the President-elect of the opposition party ever sat down together to discuss grave national matters.

The meeting was held in the Red Room at the White House, rather than in the Executive Offices, for the convenience of Mr. Roosevelt. The only others present were Secretary Mills and Professor Moley. The President found his successor affable but not cooperative. A little progress was made. It was not a fraction of what the President desired.

The following is my personal opinion, influenced by no one.

Mr. Hoover went more than halfway to meet the President-elect. Mr. Roosevelt did not intend to do likewise. If he had, the international debt problem would have been solved before he took office. Furthermore, if subsequent efforts repeatedly made by Mr. Hoover, as problem followed problem, had found the President-elect at all in a mood to join the President in the programs that should have been initiated and brought to a prompt conclusion, the misery of the first few months of the Roosevelt Administration would have been avoided. The bank crisis and the national banking holiday, for instance, were unnecessary. . . .

Mr. Hoover followed his conference with the President-elect by another conference the following day, with the ranking members of the Committee on Ways and Means, and the Senate Committee on Finance. It proved a futile effort. The Democrats there present refused to go along with the President. The meeting broke up in less than an hour and a half. Then the President made public a statement. It was followed by a statement by Mr. Roosevelt. The two were in agreement on certain points, but at odds over procedure. The President believed in a commission to handle the international fiscal problem. Mr. Roosevelt held to diplomatic exchanges, which at the least would have required months of effort and involved all manner of questions.

Whatever the point of view, Mr. Hoover did do his utmost in the way of cooperation. The attitude of the President-elect, on the other hand, was that "the baby is not on my doorstep." His followers agreed with him. Nothing could be said to disabuse their minds, notwithstanding that what Mr. Hoover wanted to do was to prevent it from being upon Mr. Roosevelt's doorstep from the day he entered office. But the President-elect could not see it that way. He kept saying he would not have any responsibility until March 4. In consequence the "baby" was very much on his doorstep the day he took the oath of office. In fact, it stays prominently there to the day this is written, with all the troubles it has caused, and with all the moneys of which this Government has been unnecessarily deprived.

The Two Weeks that Shook America

THE last two weeks of the Administration were the most critical of the entire emergency.

It became known around the middle of February that certain prominent Democrats of wealth and financial position had drawn out large sums of gold and had exported their money. The insiders in the banking world looked upon this as a cue that these Democrats knew what was coming. Thus the increasing intensity as the news spread, and as report followed rumor, and fact followed disclosure, regarding the intended course of the President-elect. However well the New Deal might work out in practice, people with any money at all were not going to take chances.

The fire of panic was fed by many other collateral facts, some of which have been previously referred to. The unwillingness of the President-elect to cooperate in handling the foreign-debt and currency-stabilization questions until after March 4th, created a feeling of discouragement. The publication of the R.F.C. loans, which Vice President-elect Garner had forced, did incalculable harm, because of the tender situation. The failure of many of the banks to which loans were made spread further and further.

These fears received final support when Senator Carter Glass of Virginia declined to assume the post of Secretary of the Treasury, the accepted reason being that the President-elect had refused to give the Senator assurances against inflation and currency tinkering.

In the last fourteen banking days of the Hoover Administration, boardings had totaled \$1,212,000,000. This was an average of \$86,571,000 taken out of circulation every day and put in vaults, shipped abroad or tucked away the Lord knows where. On



Mr. Hoover about to deliver the most important speech of his campaign for reelection, at St. Paul in November, 1932.

only one of the fourteen days was any money returned to circulation, showing that the people had any confidence at all—and that confidence was limited to one million dollars, or less than one cent per inhabitant.

We must deviate at this point for a moment from the problems of a dying administration, to a happening that stirred the deepest emotions in all the American people. On the evening of February 15th came the flash from Miami, Florida, that an attempt had been made to assassinate the President-elect. The United Press was the first to come through with it to the White House. Its office here gave me the meager information it had, and asked for comment. I no sooner hung up the telephone than the Associated Press was on the wire, with the metropolitan newspapers waiting as I talked.

It was information I had to convey to the President. I broke it to him as easily as I knew how. I asked him first if he had heard anything from the President-elect that evening. He had been in frequent contact incident to the cooperative program he was seeking to forward, and it was possible there had been an indirect if not direct contact within the last few hours. But he replied in the negative. I then edged up to the press flashes I had received. He was shocked, literally shouting over the telephone:

"What! Are you sure?"

I advised him that the reports from each quarter were practically identical, if fragmentary. He asked excitedly if I was positive that Mr. Roosevelt had escaped, perhaps thinking I was holding something back. I assured him that the man who was so soon to succeed him had suffered no harm.

"Thank God for that!" he exclaimed.

All differences, all partisanship, all failures at cooperation in a dire (Please turn to page



Governor Comstock of Michigan, whom—following Long's lead—declared a "banking holiday" in his State, February 14, 1933.



The Ghost Lantern

They had returned to snatch at a memory of an hour when the flesh had lived.

IN Nikko, where the gold- and red-lacquered temples nestle in the rain-drenched hills, and the tumbling Daiya sings its song of the centuries under the Sacred Bridge Mibashi, there is a legend of long ago. Thus runs the tale:

Once, by the corner of the shrine of Futa-ara Jinja, when the cold wet mists of the last darkness hung like ragged shrouds from the tall cypressieras on the hillside above, a lantern of bronze turned suddenly into the ghost of a man. Seeing it thus, a samurai of the temple guards rushed upon it with drawn sword and attacked it, fearing nothing save the invasion of the sacred precincts. Presently, with the first light of day, the ghost was gone, and nothing remained but sword-cuts in the bronze of the lantern—sword-cuts to the depth of half an inch, for the blade was of many thicknesses, heated, beaten and folded perhaps by Jimyo himself, backed with the softer steel that will not snap, and ground by careful hands to the keenness of a fine scapel.

The lantern still stands by the corner of the shrine of Futa-ara Jinja, the sword-cuts protected by wire netting, lest the crowds who come mutilate the relic and destroy it. Day after day tourists in mackintoshes, and pilgrims with many temple stamps on their patched rags, pass it to watch the sacred dance, or to worship at Iemetsu, . . .

Of the legend, who knows? There are taxicabs and street-cars in Nikko. Women buy kimonos in the town—kimonos which they take home to London and Budapest and Chicago—and talk about eternally. Men drink Martinis in the hotel before the dinner hour; meanwhile they talk the flat language of trade, of the heat in Tokyo, and the price of decent cigarettes. American students in yellow slickers have violated the sanctity of the Sacred Bridge. Of the legend—who knows? . . .

He was forty, although how forty had suddenly come upon him was a strange phenomenon that he had faced several mornings in his bath and then dismissed as unexplainable.

The day before yesterday he had been in his early twenties, with his colleges behind him, his friends around him, and a tinsel lifetime of high hopes and quick victories ahead.

Yesterday he had been thirty. The fringe on the tinsel was gone, but what remained was turned into solid gold. People said of him that he was lucky. Men liked him and served him. Women loved him easily and dearly. One he had taken to be his always, and together they had fought the early fight. For her he had won the first round, and started furiously into the second with the strength that was hers and his together. Always in his work and in his dealings with men he had followed the laws of righteousness—nay, served them and worshiped them. So it was that when that most ancient law of wrongness—so very ancient that perhaps it must be a law of rightness too—caught him and held him, he went down in its coils, and for a time—was not.

He was forty. The flesh of his body was still firm and strong with the years of care he had given it. The hair at his temples was barely traced with gray. The forty years lay mostly in his mind. Sometimes when he switched off the lights and pulled the covers about him, they became sixty, eighty, one hundred, as the cold phrases of the court hammered at his eardrums, and the solid, thumping lines of his decree unfolded before his closed eyes. Poor little Margaret! And in those first weeks he had cried like a child for her weakness—solved out his soul in the darkness. . . .

Six months of it, and J. T. sent him leisurely westward, with an empty, aimless assignment to look in on the company in the far East, if he cared to, and to come back with his old fire rekindled. Other men would have been sacked, but he was lucky.

The hand clanked feendishly in awkward Eastern discord on C Deck. Paper ribbons in kaleidoscopic clouds spiraled from the rails to the dock below, until the whole ship was bound to the shore by fragile color. The gangplanks rattled and screamed on their rollers as the navies pulled them in under the sheds. The babel of the crowds rose to a hull-throated roar. Then slowly the colored ribbons took up their slack, strained and parted to twine into great rainbow mats along the dock-side. A voice screamed "Shanghai—Christmas!" and another, "Don't forget about Charley Ridley!" And a third: "American Express—good-by!"

There was no one to see him off. For a time he held a ribbon that some one had thrust into his hand. Tracing its bright yellow line through the clouds of many colors, he saw the other end held tightly in the chubby hand of a little Japanese girl. It amused him to hold it until it broke; then he went below to unpack, to sign the hath-steward's schedule and send his dinner-clothing to be pressed.

SHE held a cigarette between her fingers, wondering idly why the fingers were not trembling. A flat-beeled woman with horn-rimmed glasses who had purveyed Mother Hubbard dresses and the nine speakable commandments to the heathen for thirty years, stared at her in stern disapproval and marked her as fallen. The fawn-colored traveling suit of inexpensive worsted, excellently cut—the black silk stockings and high slipper heels—the chic tricorné with its tiny flame of orange feather could not possibly clothe virtue and a clean passion for prayer.

Alice Logan was forty. Years and years ago she had been twenty, and men had worshiped at her altars. Almost as long ago she had been thirty—perhaps a thousand years ago. At thirty she had been married for six years. At forty she had been married for sixteen years—sixteen years of toil and worry and eternal hope. And always it had been her hope. She had borne it and talked it and smiled it and nursed it—always in double quantities. Women had wondered and talked among themselves. Men had shaken their heads, on occasion, and thanked their lucky stars that their pasts had never caught up to them—that their days in the Zone, the Philippines and Tientsin were clean, on paper. Men had dined for another drink and cursed their unlucky stars that their wives had not been to them what Alice had been to George Logan—that they had not kept as slim and young and complacent.

Long after the pilot boat had taken off the *Sato's* man and the last mails for the States, she stood there wondering and thinking. Presently with the last luncheon-chimes tinkling along the decks, she turned and went below. In a deck-chair, as she passed, she saw a man in brogues and a light tweed cap, reading and smoking a pipe as if he enjoyed smoking a pipe. She noticed him and nothing more. . . .

It was the usual Pacific passage. There were army officers' wives, and an anemic graduate student from Columbia who was to teach in Peking. There were missionaries who played deck-games eternally. There was the adding-machine man from Yokohama, and the talking-machine man from Shanghai—both

by
**James
 Warner
 Bellah**

Illustrated by
 Arthur William Brown

with Adam's apples, ill-fitting whites and a thirst for gin slings. There were two undergraduates seeing the world through rose-colored glasses on their golf-playing fathers. There was a robust Y.M.C.A. man with a passion for tournament organization and making speeches at tiffin in the saloon. There were two inquisitive old maids who lay awake nights to see that everyone went below at eleven when the lights went out in the public rooms. . . .

How they met doesn't matter. Perhaps he stepped aside as she came up the companion. Perhaps they nodded casually as they passed each other before breakfast on the promenade. Presently they had spoken of the weather and the ship and laughed a silent, polite little laugh together. It was all very proper and harmless. They were forty. At twenty, one loves love and leaps into it headlong. At forty one hates it a little, but laughs at it because it has no power left to snare. So she read his books, and he read hers. She smoked one or two of his cigarettes when she had left her case below. Once he caddied one of hers. Once he went to her cabin for a scarf when the night breeze turned cool. Once she loaned him a needle and thread, and ended by sewing on the button herself. It was all very proper and harmless.

When the new moon stole across the waters after them in the early evening, they walked the deck once or twice and talked of the speed of the ship, of plays they had seen, of hooks they had read.

In Honolulu, for some slow reason that crawled in the mind of each, they went ashore separately and did not meet until each came aboard again. He lunched at the Young with Burney, the company man, and came back to the ship with him. Bur-



"Look here," he said gruffly, "I want you to know that when I kissed you last night, I meant to kiss you. I sha'n't apologize."

ney was garrulous and homesick. When the diving boys leaped to the lifeboats from the shed top, Alice Logan stopped at his elbow to watch, and seeing him, nodded and spoke. He introduced Burney, and the three of them stood there until the fifteen-minute bogle went. When Burney went off, he sent two fragrant leis back to them. They hung them around their necks and waved him good-by.

Together they stood at the rail tossing coins to the diving boys, and paying them for one-an'-a-halves from the bridge as the *Sato* pulled out into the harbor. It was all very proper and harmless. After the last of the boys had gone, and Diamond Head stood high in its rainbow crown off their port beam, she took off her lei and dropped it overboard.

"You must, you know—before you leave the harbor."

He nodded, and dropped his own. "I have heard," he said, "that whom you leave Hawaii with—"

"There are many silly legends," she said.

"—You will never leave again," he persisted.

"I hope not," she laughed. "Look—the Reverend Thompson is talking to that Japanese girl. His board would hardly approve—or his wife."

He laughed.

IT is nine steamer days by the *Sato* from Honolulu to Yokohama.

Two nights later he was in the smoke-lounge before dinner. When she came in, they had a cocktail together. An hour before, they had been swimming in the canvas deck-tank, and the water had been chilly. The cocktail was very proper and harmless. They had two.

On the deck after dinner, with the full-blown moon hanging above them like a great temple lantern, she told him slowly and quite fully about George Logan. It seemed the most natural thing in the world to do: Two kindly souls alone on a steamer; each of them old enough and sympathetic enough to understand; each of them young enough to be interested. The Pacific wastes all about them—not another steamer within hundreds of miles, and the Midway Islands two days away and far to the southward. What she didn't face, until she went below to comb her long hair in front of the tiny mirror, was that quite probably she would have told him the story in the crowds of Market Street or the traffic rumble of Broadway. It frightened her, that thought. She lay awake for hours in the stuffiness of her cabin, thinking over the things she had said.

Poor George's drinking. Bateman who hated him. The story the papers had had three years before, and that long-forgotten incident twenty years ago in Guam—forgotten to everything but the records in Washington. But the thing that brought the hot blood to her cheeks, was the picture she had drawn of a great big capable man with the mind and emotions of a sniveling child—a child whose mothering was her job.

And in another cabin on the deck above, the man lay awake thinking of things he had said about a chapter of his life that he had closed and sealed behind him—a chapter that he had deliberately opened again for the gentle hurt it would give him. But the thing that made him clench his fists and finally dress again for the deck, was that he had let himself off more easily than he had let Margaret off.

The next morning they nodded casually. In the afternoon she did not swim, but wrote letters instead. In the evening he took his pre-dinner drink in the smoke-room proper. After dinner he went back for another, and read there until ten o'clock. He saw her pass the open door once with the Y.M.C.A. man, and heard him say, "St. Mihiel." The word shocked him slightly, for he had eliminated it from his own vocabulary for cause.

When the smoke-room lights went out, he strolled forward to the break in the promenade, and stood there with the spume-damp wind tearing at his cap visor and greasing his cheeks with salt. The ship's bell tolked and tolked again. It occurred to him presently to take nine turns of the deck and go down. He stepped back and looked upward. She was on the boat-deck, leaning against the rail directly above him.

He turned quickly and went up the ladder.

For several moments neither spoke. They stood there side by side watching the slow rhythmic dip and rise of the high fo'c'sle head—listening to the soft sough of wind in the signal balyards.

Then—

"I don't want you," she said, "to believe quite all I told you last night."

He nodded. "Nor I. You see, I wasn't in the least blameless. If I had been, my story would never have happened."



A flat-heeled woman who had purveyed the nine speakable com-

"I think sometimes—that I love my husband more than I love anything else. It is not entirely his fault."

"Please." He touched her arm. "People become a trifle mad on steamers. You don't have to say any more."

"No," she said. "But I must say this: If I didn't love him, I should have left him long before this. It hasn't been pleasant, following him about to protect him from himself. But I've done it—and now I'm rather glad it's too late to do anything else."

"What do you mean by that?"

She laughed. "I'm old now. In ten years I will be half a century old—that's very, very old, you know."

He rubbed his chin and looked at her out of the corner of his eyes. "The way you say it is convincing—but I don't believe it."

"Do you suppose," she asked, "that we shall run into flying fishes here in the Pacific? I love them. I remember once on the way to Coloon—"

soul an Alice awoke who had always been there waiting for just such a kiss—awoke fearlessly, desperately, to cling warm-tipped and blindly.

A boot scraped on the bridge ladder, and they drew apart quickly like frightened children. Her eyes looked into his for one terrible, yearning moment with the full light of her soul burning in them. Then he closed his eyes with the pain of that revelation. When he opened them again, she was gone.

The next day they saw each other at tiffin across the tables of the saloon. That night, the printed souvenir passenger-lists were out with two blank pages at the back, headed, "*Ship's Acquaintances.*" After dinner he tore his hip and dropped it over-side. As he passed along the boat-deck to the smoke-room, he saw the tip of a lighted cigarette glowing from a deck-chair in the cut-in behind the officers' quarters. He knew it was hers, and crossed to the empty chair beside her.

"Good evening," she laughed. "You've been hiding. But I've wanted to see you all day—to apologize for a lapse of elderly dignity. I wasn't fair to you last night."

"You weren't fair?" he said. "It was I who wasn't fair."

Her laughter ripped again. "Really?"

"Look here," he said gruffly. "I want you to know that I won't kiss you again under any circumstances. I want you to know also, that when I kissed you last night, I meant to kiss you. I shan't apologize."

Her mind reeled for just the tiniest round: "All my life—all my life—all my life!"

"That's right," she said. "Stick to your guns."

"Damn my guns!" he muttered. "Look here—as long as I live, I shall hold—nothing!"

"Go on—you'll feel better."

"Very well—then I'll hold it against you that you didn't wait for me to come along."

"I should be a pretty sight at forty if I hadn't married," she drawled. "Sharp nose and shrill tongue, flat heels, glasses, intolerant."

"The devil!" he said.

"No—she-devil."

HE scowled into the darkness, thinking: "I'm acting like a damned adolescent idiot.—Drink?" he said aloud.

"No—but you have one, please."

He leaned back in his chair and clasped his hands behind his head. They sat there for quite an hour without speaking further. When she said good-night and went down, she held out her hand to him.

"For silly old fools, we've behaved ourselves wonderfully well."

"Yes," he said. "Good-night."

In the darkness of her berth, with the washing of waters outside, she gave herself up to it for one brief moment.

"Oh, God," she whispered. "Oh, God, dear God—I love him. I love him! To think that I have to go on, always knowing that. I have ten years more. Why can't they be mine—the only ones I've had? Why—why?"

(Please turn to page 111)



mandments to the heathen for thirty years, stared at her and marked her as fallen.

"I don't know—I've never crossed the Pacific before."

They were standing very close together. The ship's bell tolked again, and the relief quartermaster crossed the well-deck below. Behind them the deserted decks were a blaze of empty light. Their elbows touched once or twice, and then quite without warning she was in his arms. For a moment her heart fluttered in girlish panic. Almost she said, "You mustn't!" but her mind laughed at that. Then suddenly somewhere in the depths of her

Star of Midnight

A glamorous romance of post-repeal New York

by **Arthur Somers Roche**

Illustrated by Maurice Bower

The Story Thus Far:

"BROADWAY'S beau when he isn't Park Avenue's pet," was the way that professional scandalmonger Tennant described Clay Dalzell in his gossip column. Dalzell called Tennant on the phone and told him to keep his, Dalzell's, name out of print.

"Okay, if you say so," responded Tennant. "Say, listen, I've got two beauts. One of them is so hot I wouldn't even mention it over the phone, but I'll be around about ten o'clock, if you'll be in."

"What's the other?" asked Dalzell.

"One of your friends," chuckled Tennant. "Donna Mantin. She takes afternoon tea in the apartment of Jimmy Kinland. Is that hot, or just sizzling? Why do you let a nice l'il doll like the Mantin baby chase around with a gangster?"

"You're not printing that one," said Dalzell.

"Show me cause," laughed Tennant.

"Doris Weatherby's parents will announce her engagement to the Marquis of Maidstone next month. Trade?"

"Well," said Tennant, "that's not so exciting; but I suppose it'll have to do. Better tip the Mantin gal to watch her step."

At Mrs. Corey's dinner that evening Dalzell found occasion for a talk with Donna Mantin. She wanted to quit Kinland, but she had written foolish letters to him. Dalzell had begged

off from the theater-party which was to follow the dinner; and while the rest of the company went to see the famous and mysterious new prima donna Mary Smith in the latest Broadway success "Star of Midnight," he called upon Kinland in his ornate apartment. And by using certain information concerning the gangster's income-tax evasions as a threat, Dalzell forced Kinland to give up Donna's letters to him; he then returned to his own apartment to await Tennant's call. . . . The phone rang—not Tennant, however, but the vibrant voice of a woman who refused to identify herself, and who said: "Tennant, Tom Tennant of the Evening Star, is coming to see you tonight. He's going to ask your advice about a story. I want you to prevent him from printing it."

Dalzell offered to do what he could, and the woman hung up. Where had he heard that voice before? . . . Time passed, and Tennant did not appear. Finally Dalzell called the Star office: "Clay Dalzell speaking. Tell Tennant that if he is coming to see me tonight, to come soon. I'm going to bed."

"Did he have an appointment with you, Mr. Dalzell? This is his secretary speaking."

"Why, yes. Did he forget?"

"He left the office at a quarter to ten, Mr. Dalzell. He didn't say where he was going. And he was killed at about five minutes of ten, according to the police, at the corner of Sixty-third Street and Madison."

"Killed?" Dalzell was shocked. "Automobile accident?"

"Shot. Murdered by some one in another car." And shortly afterward the phone rang again—Donna Mantin this time. "Clay!" Her voice was excited. "You should have come to the theater. Mary Smith disappeared after the first act. They put an understudy on in her place. It couldn't have been more thrilling."

Tennant murdered while on his way to see him about a story that even Tennant hesitated to print! A mysterious woman phoning in terror about that same story! The strange leading lady of "Star of Midnight" disappearing! And next day, after the police had come questioning Dalzell—and he had evaded telling what he knew—Mary Smith herself called up: to insist that she knew nothing about the murder of Tennant or its causes—and to insist that her disappearance was final and permanent.

Dalzell set out to find Mary Smith, using as tools his vast acquaintance in New York, and his remarkable gifts for putting two and two together. He deduced that she had disappeared because some one in the audience had frightened her; and he came upon reasons for believing that some one to be a powerful but unscrupulous lawyer named Ebor Basson, with whom he had dined at the request of the wealthy Mrs. Fentress. He came upon reasons for believing, moreover, that she was posing as a nurse under the name of Jane Torrance, and living in an apartment in a particular neighborhood downtown. And he set a keen-witted young woman in the real-estate business to search for her.



"Were you looking for Miss Torrance?"
"Good afternoon, Miss Smith," said Dalzell.



*"I've had three husbands, Dal. A fourth is too much."
"What else is there for us?"
"This afternoon has not
been without its charm," she
answered.*

Now came a surprise: the gangster Kinland came to see Dalzell, and told him that he had learned through underworld channels that the same men who had murdered Tennant were threatening Dalzell too—why he didn't know. But Kinland was protecting Dalzell with a secret bodyguard—for the odd reason that Dalzell had arranged, in the Donna Mantin episode, that in case of injury to himself, the evidence against Kinland would be turned over to the authorities!

A stranger episode followed. Mrs. Basson called to see Dalzell at his apartment and proved to be the woman he had loved and lost ten years before—and whom he had never been able to forget.

She stood close to him.

"Clay, I've been longing for you. Have you longed for me?"

"Isn't that a bit silly? In ten years things die, don't they?"

"Do they?" She smiled at him.

The breath from her parted lips fanned his cheek. Ten years fell away from them both as his arms went about her. (*The story continues in detail.*)

THERE had been women in Dalzell's life; but always, through the decade that had elapsed since last he had held Jerry in his arms, the other women had been pale substitutes for her. Passion had mastered him; but always he had felt that somehow he was making sacrifice to Jerry, that what he offered





the love of the moment was really a token laid at the altar of the one woman in the world.

The others had been gay, sweet, charming; but always they had been casual. The touch of a woman's lips, the clasp of a woman's arms, the mutual surrender that can be love's imitation—these delights he had not denied himself; but every woman who left him but intensified the ache that Jerry had put in his heart. And now that ache was gone.

She stirred, gently releasing herself from his still ardent embrace. Her black eyes held the gaiety that had entranced him ten years ago.

"I hope your man is properly trained," she smiled. Her full lips were slightly parted; he bent to kiss them again, but the softest palm in the world pressed against his mouth. "Not any more. If your man should come in, I think I'd die."

She produced a vanity. She exclaimed in horror at the sight of her hair in the tiny mirror.

"He won't come in," Dalzell assured her.

The glance she gave him was arch.

"Has experience taught him discretion? But that's not a fair question, is it, Dal?" She walked across to his bedroom door. She turned back to smile again at him.

"I peeked in here while I waited for you. May I use your comb?"

"Of course." As she turned again to go through the door, he stared at her. Lovely! More desirable than even his dreams of ten years ago had imagined—and she was his, now! Nothing in the world would ever take her from him again. He leaned back on the couch and closed his eyes. Ten years ago he had planned to go to Monte with her. He had planned a trip through the Mediterranean, a glimpse of Egypt—there were a hundred places where their love should be consecrated. Those places still waited their arrival. He had thought his pulse could beat no more rapidly than it had when he held her in his arms just now; but realization had not dulled the shine of anticipation. He felt the hot blood surge through his veins as he looked ahead to other moments as defensible as that which had just been.

SHE reentered the room, as *soignée* as though nothing more exciting had happened to her in the past hour than the smoking of a cigarette. She evaded his quick embrace.

"Not now, darling," she said. "There's so much to say."

"What are words?" he asked thickly.

"Things to kill time, until emotion makes us inarticulate," she laughed.

"That's the way I feel; that's the way I want to be," he told her.

She shook her head, daintily firm.

"Your man can't be that discreet," she said. "I want a cigarette, and perhaps the tiniest drink."

"You shall have them both," he said, offering her the first and starting to mix the second. "I'll even join you in both."

If this were her mood of the moment, it should not be denied her. Never would he deny her anything.

"Talk to me," she said. She puffed

her cigarette and sipped at her highball. "Tell me everything."

"Three words will do it: I love you."

"And haven't wavered?"

"And haven't wavered."

She sighed; unconsciously she stretched, catlike; smooth muscles rippled under the white skin of her arms; curves that were riper than ten years ago were accentuated by her movement, but still were not too ripe.

"You were always satisfying, Dal. You always took the moment and didn't ask or worry about yesterday."

"That was because I was always thinking of tomorrow, as I still am."

"And what will tomorrow bring?" she asked.

"The Rex sails tomorrow. I know a man who will have your passport ready, visas and all, by ten in the morning."

"Dal, you're as mad as ever."

"Mad?" He stared at her.

"But charmingly mad, of course."

"You mean you won't go?"

"You can't think I would," she told him.

"After what—you're mine, Jerry."

"Of course. But we needn't tell the world so, need we?"

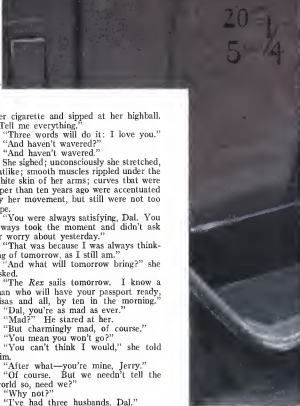
"Why not?"

"I've had three husbands, Dal."

"Don't remind me of them," he said.

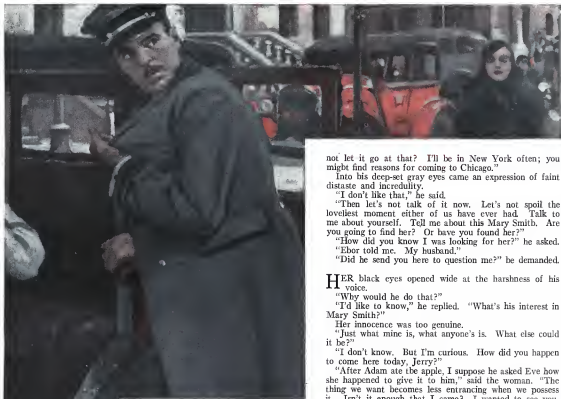
"But don't you see? A fourth—it's a little bit too much, don't you think?"

"What else is there for us?" he asked.



He held his own brass-buttoned minutes later he was





"This afternoon has not been without charm," she answered.

"That was this afternoon. But other days—"

"Can be as lovely," she interrupted. "You'll never grow up. You're as young as you were ten years ago, aren't you, Dal?"

"Am I?"

"Impetuous. I like it. But we must be sane. Let's not be reckless. Why, I wouldn't let you throw away your career."

"Career?" His laugh was harsh. "I tossed that away ten years ago, Jerry."

"One career, perhaps. But you have another now. I've heard more about you lately than I would have heard, had you become a great lawyer, I think. The great investigator, Clay Dalzell!"

"A fine career," he sneered.

"But fascinating, isn't it? People tell me that you know everything about everyone. And you know such interesting people, such terribly exciting people. That newspaper man was on his way to see you, the papers say, when he was killed. . . . Maybe it's not an orthodox career, but you must have more fun than the dry life of a lawyer would give you. And you're not going to get mixed up in a scandal with a much-married woman like myself."

"The loveliest woman in the world," he said.

"You're sweet to say so. And you are the sweetest man in the world. Why

not let it go at that? I'll be in New York often; you might find reasons for coming to Chicago."

Into his deep-set gray eyes came an expression of faint distaste and incredulity.

"I don't like that," he said.

"Then let's not talk of it now. Let's not spoil the loveliest moment either of us have ever had. Talk to me about yourself. Tell me about this Mary Smith. Are you going to find her? Or have you found her?"

"How did you know I was looking for her?" he asked.

"Ebor told me. My husband."

"Did he send you here to question me?" he demanded.

HER black eyes opened wide at the harshness of his voice.

"Why would he do that?"

"I'd like to know," he replied. "What's his interest in Mary Smith?"

"Her innocence was too genuine."

"Just what mine is, what anyone's is. What else could it be?"

"I don't know. But I'm curious. How did you happen to come here today, Jerry?"

"After Adam ate the apple, I suppose he asked Eve how she happened to give it to him," said the woman. "The thing we want becomes less entrancing when we possess it. Isn't it enough that I came? I wanted to see you, Dal. I haven't been in New York for years, except passing through on the way to or from Europe. Twice, on those occasions, I telephoned, and you were out of town. I never gave my name. Other times I didn't have opportunity to get away. Today I did. And there'll be other opportunities, Dal my darling."

"Will there?" He eyed her, appraisal in his stare. Lovely, yes. More beautiful now than ten years ago. To have her, was to know the supreme height of emotion. But was that because she had represented the glamour of woman to a boy in his early twenties? Was it because he had never been able, in these late years, to conceive of any other woman as being able to give supreme bliss to him?

She had married twice, he had known for some years. An hour ago he had learned that she had taken unto herself a third mate. Overwhelmed by her quick surrender, he had not analyzed what this might mean. Now he seemed to see the bird-eyed Basson, a little man, undistinguished, devoid of charm, with no attraction whatsoever for a woman like Jerry.

But she had married him. Why, God knew. Dalzell felt a disinclination to learn the reason for himself. That reason might be a sordid one. Basson vanished from the mental film; instead, he saw himself. He saw a man who was associating unpleasant things with the lovely Jerry.

What had happened, that he was able to think of Jerry as short of perfection? That she, a married woman, had granted him confidences could not make him look upon her with contempt. They loved each other; and love, to Dalzell, was excuse for anything. At least, he loved her—or had loved her. He frowned as he made this correction. Had loved Jerry! But why put it in the past tense? Fifteen minutes ago he had felt a surge of emotion that could be nothing less than love.

Was she (Please turn to page 70)

coat underneath the starter's coat. Two gliding off in a taxi.



Soup, Soup, Beautiful

SOMETHING has got to be done about Soup.

I am not an old man, as old men go—and how fast they can go, when they get a start on their Dotage and Anecdotal! But even I can remember when Soup, practically all Soup everywhere, was a good, dependable, filling food, guaranteed to take the wrinkles out of the stomach, produce a sensation of warmth and comfort, and promote the nourishment of the human animal.

I note a tendency these days, in many places, to consider Soup from any and every angle except its value as food.

Its esthetic value, its decorative value, its pictorial possibilities, its value as an agreeable perfume to accompany a meal—its literary value on a bill-of-fare, even—all seem to be stressed in some quarters to the exclusion of its utility as nourishment.

This current theory about Soup unfortunately extends not only to tea-rooms, restaurants, hotels, and the like, but in too many instances it has actually invaded the Home.

It is as a Guardian of the Sanctity of the Home, a zealous partisan of Family Life, that I rise up to protest.

When I want real Soup nowadays, Soup which is at once a ministrant to the soul, a servant to the body and a stimulant to the mind, I take a short-cut and send to the grocery-store and get it. For it is a fact, explain it how you will, that the people whose business it is to make Soup have retained the Sound Tradition.

They put Ingredients in it.

And what Soup needs (I shall maintain this to my dying day!)—is Ingredients. And it is easier to buy it from those who know how to make it than it is to teach a skeptic who has been influenced by a certain modern cult. Those whose profession it is to make Soup are evidently men who remember the days of their youth, when Soup was Soup, and Men were Men, and Food was Food, and the Great Open Spaces of Man's interior demanded that they be filled with something more substantial than mere suggestions of food. These serious men are not buffeted by the super-elegant school of thought; are not afraid to put Ingredients in their product. And Ingredients is just a flowery word for plenty of beef, carrots, potatoes, tomatoes, onions, peas and so forth. I have a statistical table at my elbow which speaks of these Ingredients in terms of proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, calories and gadgets of that sort. But I prefer to think of onions, meat, potatoes and so forth. My stomach will snap at a piece of meat or a potato; but remains calm and unimpassioned when you mention calories and vitamins.

I won't go into detail with regard to the sort of thing I have been through in Ye Olde Tea Shoppe, or certain hotels and restaurants which aspire to be swanky. But not long ago I went to dinner with a friend in his own home, and it was one of a series of dinners and luncheons which have led to this public protest.

We will call the hostess Mable. I have known Mable a long time, and Mable as a human being is Okay. I honor, admire and respect Mable; and I have known Mable more years than either she or I chat about generally. Bill, too. Bill is Mable's husband.

About two years ago Bill confided to me that Mable had begun to go esthetic. I didn't say anything—I hadn't said anything, in fact, though I had noticed it myself. But it isn't the kind of thing you say to a husband about his wife. Mable is a kind of a Pet Wife, anyhow. She gets away with anything she starts, as far as Bill is concerned.

"COME to dinner some evening soon, and I'll show you," said Bill. "You haven't been over for a long time, and I think Mable has got one of her streaks when she isn't sore at you."

He didn't mention Soup, specifically.

But when I got to the house, I saw at a glance it had been Done Over. I can't describe it, but you get what I mean. The latest kind of antiques. Everything matched everything else. Mable had done herself over. I don't mean face-lifting, and that stuff. Mable doesn't need that—yet. But clothes, they matched the furniture—the *décor*. There were Moods, everywhere. And Tones. And Overtones.

"How slick everything looks, Mable," I said, as we sat down to dinner.

"Slick?" said Mable, with an interrogatory note in her voice. I saw it was the wrong word. She was living in a dream just now, where *Slick* wasn't one of the accepted words. And yet I remember Mable when it was one of her own favorite expressions.

The dinner began to come on. And I saw at once that it was out of some kind of Mood, too. It Matched. It was "adorable." It was Food for the Eyes. It was Food for the Soul. It had come right out of the scrap-book of one of these recipe-mongering lady experts who are so damned elegant that they think up food for everything except the masculine stomach.

Naturally, I didn't say anything. I am, at times, the Perfect Guest.

But Bill got in bad when the Soup came on.



"It would be swell stuff to put on as perfume," said Bill, "but it isn't much to eat."

Soup

*Civilized drinking?
Yes... And how about
civilized eating too?*

by Don Marquis

*Illustrated by
Herb Roth*



I remember when Soup was a filling food, guaranteed to produce a sensation of comfort.

I don't know what the Ingredients were in this Soup. But I saw at once that it Matched.

It matched Mable's eyes. It had an affinity for the table linen. It was composed in harmony with the mural décor. It didn't fight with Mable's clothes. It was right out of Mable's current mood.

Bill should have eaten, and kept his mouth shut. But Bill is, in certain phases, a gump, a lunkhead and a brute. He doesn't deserve a wife like Mable, whose thoughts and visions are so often with higher things.

"It smells nice," said Bill. "What's in it?"

Mable conveyed in a few precise words, chosen to discourage Bill's common outlook on life, that it was the latest thing in Soups. There wasn't much of it, at that, and it would have been more tactful in Bill to have got through what little there was in silence, and gone on to something else. But some men are just simply—

well, you know what I mean: once they get a start—"It does smell nice," said Bill again. It did, too. And in a minute he added: "It tastes okay, too."

"What more do you want in soup?" said Mable. She spoke brightly, cheerily; but there was a thunder-cloud gathering low down on the horizon of the sunlit sky. Bill should have let it go at that.

"You got the recipe from some perfume-maker?" inquired Bill. "It would be swell stuff to put on your coat-lapel as a perfume, but it isn't much to eat."

I won't go into details. Bill thinks he has a sense of humor. To my mind, it verges on bad taste at times. Occasionally it passes the verge. Here was a wife all arched up, even to the soup; and here was a husband making a coarse beast of himself, lacerating all her finer moods and emotions without even knowing she

had them. To elaborate on the dialogue would be too painful; besides, it was much of it printed and some of it binted, when the case came into the Court of Domestic Relations. I don't think she should have hit Bill over the head with the tureen, and then changed mental cruelty later in the court; but I could understand the movements of the woman's mind and soul, too.

I could understand Bill's point of view, too. He was a man who had been brought up, and had progressed into middle life, in the firm conviction that Soup was Food: the sound tradition upon which this nation was built. And then he was asked suddenly, as he put it himself: "To content his digestive apparatus and internal ornaments, with smells, whiffs, aromas and suggestions!"

TWO hearts broken, and a home wrecked, all because this well-meaning woman did not realize that the main thing about Soup is Ingredients! And, I am bound to say, the rest of the meal matched the Soup.

Not that I am any advocate of mere gross bulk in Soup. Quite the contrary. I do not scorn the subtle, the poetic, the lyrical, the fine blend of flavors and aromas.

What I want is both. Bulk and subtlety. Body and soul. A history of Soup is really a history of civilization. Probably the first food prepared by prehistoric man—or by his wife—was predominantly animal food. He went out and speared a bison or a moose and lugged the carcass home, and she roasted it, grilled it—in fact, burnt it a little, in their cave; and the dogs, children and neighbors smelt it roasting—all the neighboring outlaws and in-laws—and flocked to the cave. Bulk was the main thing then.

Pottery was invented, and meat began to be boiled or seethed. Just at what period roots and herbs, various vegetal ingredients, began to go into the primitive casserole, (Please turn to page 91)

Life Begins



I wanted to go to France as an entertainer, but Uncle Sam wanted me to stay home and peddle Liberty Bonds.

"**L**ADY SLAVEY," my first big success, lasted four years. Few shows can boast a longer run. I wasn't quite twenty-five when we moved from Washington, where we opened, to the Casino in New York. We played two seasons at the Casino; later we went on tour. I shall never forget the thrill of those first weeks on Broadway.

May Duryea, a good trouper if there ever was one, was my roommate. May and I took a room as close as possible to the theater. Every evening after the performance, fortified with huge steak sandwiches, we would hurry home to watch my name blinking in electric lights on the façade of the Casino.

The success of "Lady Slavey" soon made it possible for me to send for my parents. I found a home in Bayside and we settled down in Long Island. For three years I commuted to New York, taking the last train home at night, and walking a mile and a half over a dark country road alone. Mother always sat up and waited for me.

My first season in "Lady Slavey" wound up in a blaze of glory. And now Mother put her foot down: I must have a vacation, a real holiday. I was twenty-six years old, and I had traveled thousands upon thousands of miles, tramping, but I had never in all my life taken a trip *just for pleasure*.

For days Mother and I pored over resort pamphlets, and were bedazzled by the splendors of hotels and watering-places. At last we settled on a hotel at Lake George, and went into a perfect orgy of dressmaking. I was as thrilled as a débutante getting ready for her first party. As for Mother, she confidently

expected me to be the belle of the ball. And why not? Wasn't I Marie Dressler, the toast of Broadway?

But alas, we reckoned without public opinion.

In those days an actress was an actress, no matter whether she was a Duse or a hurlesque queen. And a musical-comedy star—well, almost any committee of citizens would have awarded her a scarlet letter without hithering to go into her record. No sooner had I landed at Lake George than I realized that, the weather man to the contrary notwithstanding, we were in for a heavy frost.

Indeed, I hadn't unpacked my trunk before the place was huzzing with the news that the terrible woman who played *Flo Honeydew* in "Lady Slavey" had arrived. Fond mammas promptly tied their sons to the hedposts, locked their innocent daughters in closets, and instructed the dogs not to wag their tails! Heads were turned at my approach. I longed to go home, but I knew the truth would break Mother's heart. Grimly I settled down to stay my three weeks out, if the whole darn' lake froze over, and the haughty dowagers who rocked on hotel porches got permanent cricks in their necks from snooting me. Anyway, I always did love a good stiff fight.

At the hotel, the climax to the day's excitement was the trip down to the docks to see the boats come in morning and afternoon. I stood on the fringe of the crowd, wishing hungrily for a familiar face. One afternoon I returned to the hotel after one of these lonely excursions, feel-

Illustrated by

at 60

Pathos and slapstick, high comedy and outright tragedy, trumpets of victory and howls of defeat, money to choke and no carfare—she tasted all of it, that miracle-woman of our times who died at the pinnacle of her success.

by Marie Dressler

as told to Mildred Harrington



telling her the truth. To my great surprise, she did not seem in the least shocked when I told her who I was. I found the daughter almost as delightful as the mother, and spent a happy hour with the only two people who had spoken to me voluntarily since my arrival.

It was almost dark when I got back to the hotel. The verandas were deserted; everybody was dressing for dinner. I climbed the stairs to my room to change too, though I knew only too well that there is little fun in dressing for hostile eyes. At any rate, I had the memory of one perfect afternoon to hug to my heart. That would help me through the ordeal of the remaining week of my incarceration.

Imagine my stupefaction on entering the dining-room that evening to find people rising and offering me a place at their tables. "Do come over here, Miss Dressler," invited one overstuffed dowager who heretofore had been unable to distinguish me from a grain of dust. "There's such a nice view of the lake from our window!"

"We've been saving a place for you," besought a plump bewhiskered gentleman whose wife made pleasant little clucking sounds as he drew out a chair for me.

For a moment I thought I was crazy, that my longing for friendliness had induced the sort of mirage which torments thirsty travelers lost in a desert. I remained dazed all evening, for I was made the center of attention.

Not until the following morning did I learn what had caused this sudden right-about-face in my fellow-boarders. Then I discovered that the gracious old lady who had taken me under her kindly wing that afternoon was the widow of General U. S. Grant! She had introduced herself simply as Mrs. Grant. After my initial experience at the hotel it had not occurred to me that anybody so forthright and friendly could be socially prominent, much less a former first lady.

It was during the run of "Lady Slavey" that my path just crossed that of Nella Webb, a pretty dark-eyed little Southern girl later to become a well-known *désirée*, and still later, an even more widely known astrologer. It was in the latter rôle that her stubborn faith in me, inspired by what she read in the stars, was to change the course of my whole life.

But I must not tell you that story just yet.

TO get back to our muttens: after "Lady Slavey" I was offered a part in a William H. Harris production called "Courtied into Court." Of course we had to go on the road with the piece. My rôle was the lead, which had been created by May Irwin. The new show was quite successful. It took us all the way to San Francisco and back, and landed for me the stellar rôle in "Miss Printz," George Hobart's delicious farce.

This was, I think, in 1900.

A few years later Weber and Fields, already a famous team, parted. Joe Weber invited me to join his company, then playing "Higgledy-Piggledy," George Ade's "Rigmarole of Fun, Fancy and Foolishness." In the cast were Charlie Bigelow and Trixie Friganza. Trixie often followed me in parts, and quite frankly admitted that she imitated me. Once she laughingly said to me: "Marie, the critics all say I copy you, and they're dead right. I'd be a fool to copy anybody but you, wouldn't I?"

In "Higgledy-Piggledy," Joe Weber played the millionaire pickle king *Adolph Schnitz*, while I was his buxom daughter *Philopena*. To prove that I was heir to the *Schnitz* fortune, I strutted about the stage with a tremendous diamond pickle blazing on my breast. The biggest hits of "Higgledy-Piggledy"

ing more than ever like a leper. Back of the hotel was a deserted dance-hall which I knew housed a tinny piano. The door was unlocked, and I went in. Evergreens from a party long since ended were dying on the wall; curls of dust blew along the floor.

It was very hot that day, and I opened a window before I sat down at the worn old instrument. My fingers strayed among the ancient keys, many of them peeled and blackened by time. I've already told you that music has always been my solace when hurt or lonely. Presently I began to sing. . . .

"Charming! Very charming!" murmured a friendly voice at the window. "I wonder if you sing, 'Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms'?"

I looked up to see a sweet old face framed in graying hair. "It's one of my favorites too," I said. "Won't you come in?"

The little old lady smilingly accepted my invitation. "I live at the cottage above here," she explained. "I was passing, and heard your voice."

I don't know how long I sat there playing and singing to my audience of one. But I do know that much of the bitterness in my young heart was gone when the old lady finally stood up.

"Won't you come home with me for a cup of tea?" she urged. "I should like my daughter to meet you."

I was much agitated by her kindness, and gladly rose to follow her. But on the way up the hill to her cottage, I decided it would not be fair to let her take a musical-comedy actress into her home without

James Schucker

were the hurlesques. *The College Widower* was one, I remember. Another was the *Square Man's Girl of the Golden West*.

WHEN I joined Weber, Anna Held, famous for her beauty and her acting, as well as for her milk and champagne baths, was the star of his company. Soon the gentlemen of the press began to hint that I was stealing the show from Anna. I was entirely innocent of any predatory intention, for I had no notion of attempting what I honestly thought was the impossible. I had simply followed the dictum of my old boss George Baker of the Baker Opera Company: "Play your bit as if the show—and your job—depended on it."

But the rumor that I was stealing the show persisted, and presently the news leaked out that Anna was going to leave. I shook in my boots. Joe Weber wouldn't thank me for forcing the great Held out of his company.

One night after the curtain somebody tapped on my dressing-room door. I said, "Come," and almost fainted when Anna walked in.

Before I could pull myself together, she was holding out her hand and smiling in the friendliest manner. "I've come to say good-by, Marie," she said. "There isn't room for Dressler and Held in the same show. But there's plenty of room for two companies and two stars. I've just told Flo Ziegfeld if he didn't put you under contract for ten years, he'd lose the bet of his life!"

I shall never forget the night we opened at the Forty-fourth Street Theater in New York, just after the historic reunion of Weber and Fields. Choice seats sold for sixty dollars apiece. William Randolph Hearst is said to have paid nine hundred and forty dollars for a box. Diamond Jim Brady, the terror of Wall Street and the darling of the old Waldorf's famous Peacock Alley, was there with a bevy of beauties. Society, led by Mrs.



Miss Dressler campaigning for the Third Liberty Loan.

voice and felt my legs actually moving beneath me, I was all right.

Shortly after the Weber and Fields engagement, I got a flattering offer to try my luck in vaudeville, and in the face of much opposition accepted it. An immediate result was ten weeks straight at Proctor's Fifty-eighth Street Theater, a run which broke all existing records.

It was at Proctor's that my acquaintance with Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish began. In a hurlesque of the Cherry Sisters, I carried a basket of leeks. The impulse struck me to begin throwing them at the spectators. One hit Mrs. Fish on the head, which greatly entertained both her and her guests.

A few days later I received a note from her secretary, asking



"Well, Miss Dressler," he snapped, "what do you think of me?" I answered: "I think you have the strongest-looking neck I ever saw."

me to appear as a paid performer at one of Mrs. Fish's famous parties. I accepted. When I reached her house on the appointed evening, the secretary asked me if I would mind singing my songs at intervals instead of all at one time. Of course I said I should be delighted to work as Mrs. Fish desired. I learned later that the week before, she had made the same request of a European light-opera star whom she was paying a huge sum to entertain her guests. The artist had haughtily refused.

Of course, you know, these were the days when Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish ruled New York society with an iron hand. She was the recognized leader of the Four Hundred. Imperious, generous, brilliant herself, dullness was the one sin that she could not forgive. She demanded that those who sat about her dinner-table be funny, or handsome, or scintillating, or like herself, superbly arrogant. It made no difference to her whether their ancestors came over in the *Mayflower* or in the last boat to unload at Ellis Island.

That memorable first evening Mrs. Fish insisted that I dine with her and her guests. I was given the place of honor at table. We became firm friends, and our friendship lasted through the years until the day of her death. Never again was I a paid entertainer in her home. But I was often her guest, both in New York and Newport.

Mrs. Fish was always making me handsome presents. One evening, as I arrived, she pressed into my hand a handsome gold mesh bag with a hundred-dollar bill in it. During the evening I handed the bag to Frank Crowninshield. "Here, Frank," I said, "hold this a minute, will you? And hang onto it. When you're with the Four Hundred, you've got to be careful."

Mrs. Fish's laughter led all the rest.

How different she was from many of the socially elect of her day! I recall one *grande dame* of the Mauve Decade who invited my good friend Fritz Kreisler to dinner, and added: "Oh, Mr. Kreisler, do bring your violin."

"Delighted," said Fritz blandly, "but it will not be necessary to fetch my violin."

"Why not?" demanded the mystified G. D., who was accustomed to make her artist friends sing for their suppers.

"Well, you see, madame," replied Fritz, "my violin, it does not eat!"

But I've jumped the track again.

To get back to the story of my life: like most comics, I yearned to write and weep my way across the stage. Strangely enough, at the height of my career as a comedienne, several Englishmen saw in me the makings of a queen of tragedy. When George Edwards, the Flo Ziegfeld of England, returned to London after a brief visit to America, he reported that he had seen two artists—David Warfield, and Marie Dressler. Edwards immediately set about finding a play with what he considered a suitable emotional rôle for me.

And now comes the first real sorrow of my life: My mother had been ill for several years. While I was unconscious with typhoid fever, she died. My father—you remember, he and I were too much alike to understand each other—wanted to go to England to live with my sister Bonita, who had long since settled there with her handsome and brilliant husband. I hoped that a change of scene might help me too, for I missed my mother bitterly.

No sooner had I landed in London, than Sir Alfred Butt, at that time just plain Alfred Butt, begged me to appear for a few weeks at the Palace. I had already found that idleness gave me

too much time for grieving, and I gladly accepted his offer. At the end of the Palace engagement, Sir Oswald Stoll invited me to appear at the Coliseum. At that time the Palace got the cream of the carriage trade, while the Coliseum was known as a family theater. Imagine how thrilled I was when the Palace audience followed me to the Coliseum. It was a great personal triumph. So great, in fact, that three influential theater men promptly suggested that I put on "Higgledy-Piggledy," which had been such a tremendous success in America.

The Empire Burlesque was so confident that I would repeat my American triumph with George Ade's show that it offered me three hundred pounds a week while I was rehearsing. Nevertheless there were a few wise ones who predicted that a piece so essentially American would have no appeal for a British audience. The gloomy minority was right. The show was a complete flop. We couldn't give tickets away.

At this juncture, I was taken seriously ill and was hurried home for an operation. Before leaving England, however, I insisted that my jewelry and other belongings be pawned, and I

borrowed a large sum of money in order to pay everybody in my company two weeks' salary. When I recovered, I found that none of my hills had been paid, and that nobody knew what had become of the money.

In desperation, my friends had put me in bankruptcy. However, I still felt bound morally to make good the losses which had been sustained through me. For years this debt of honor was one of my most serious concerns. Not until *Marthy*, in "Anna Christie," catapulted me into success in the talking pictures, was I able to repay it in full. Today, I am happy to say, I do not owe anybody in England a farthing. Nevertheless I expect to die in debt to England, for I can never hope to repay my stanch friends over there for their generosity and loyalty.

It was shortly after my distressing experience in bankruptcy that I was offered the rôle which proved my nearest approach to immortality. This was the part of the boarding-house drudge in "Tillie's Nightmare." For five years, I was *Tillie*. And for many years thereafter the public remembered me, not as Marie Dressler, but as *Tillie*. For nearly a decade, hardly a day passed that somebody didn't stop me on the street or in an elevator to plead: "Please do another *Tillie*."

"Tillie's Nightmare" was real comedy. People think they remember the boarding-house slavery because she was so funny. But it was the pathos veiled by her humor, the sincerity of *Tillie*, that made her live.

LEW FIELDS, backed by the Shuberts, managed the production. Like many great successes, the show seemed doomed to fail when we opened in Albany. Half of the cast were so poor that they received notices at once. I saw there was no chance for the piece unless it was rewritten. Because I believed in it, I offered to take on the job of revision.

When we reopened in Kansas City, we packed the house. Everybody was happy except the original authors, who wired bitter complaints to Lee Shubert. They demanded that he close the show. Lee promptly passed the buck to Lew Fields. And Lew, who always got on famously with me when we weren't both trying to occupy the center of the same stage, replied that he couldn't close without running the risk of being sued by the whole company, including Dressler, whose contract called for fifteen hundred a week.

(Please turn to page 92)



The voice of Frances Marion sang over the wire:
"Pack up your pie-box and come to Hollywood."

Then Came the

THE Guards were drilling, but Cap had not gone up the crooked street to watch them.

In the first place, he had seen a great many soldiers drilled, before this. In the second place, a substantial farmer had just entered the leather-store, and Cap surmised that he had come to buy that double-harness which Orvil had been trying to sell him since the autumn before.

Cap was quite aware that he was incapable of managing this sale or any other sale. If he tried, and bungled the job, he would be subjected to the wrath and sarcasm of Orvil and Simpson. Cap planned to stay out of their way until the barness sale was consummated.

The Guards were at drill. . . . Along brick façades sounded their trampling. The young officer who shepherded them seemed almost fearful of the boyish rabble who trooped behind.

From his seat on the empty barrel in a walled nook beside his brothers' store, Cap squinted into the late afternoon sunshine. The approaching column was awkward enough. They didn't keep their lines dressed or their files closed. All the boys talked in the ranks; they waved their guns and hooted pleasantries to citizens who lined the sidewalk.

At Cray's grocery-store, Ephraim Cray and Lawyer Hollingsworth stood in the open doorway. "There comes the company," announced Cray.

The lawyer played with the snuff under his lip. "Look at Cap, over there on that barrel. Been drinking again."

"Anyway," said the grocer more charitably, "whether he's been drinking or not, he's playing hooky from the store, certain. I don't see how Orvil and Simpson put up with him."

"I don't see *how*, but I certainly see *why*," Hollingsworth felt the quid of snuff bite into his tongue. "It's because their old man in Covington pays the bills. He really set the boys up in that

"The company will observe the officer," said Cap. He pivoted, drew Harry's sword, held it to his shoulder. "Forward," he chanted. "Ha! . . . Left oblique! Ha!"

*Illustrated by
Rico Tomaso*

business, Cray. And when Cap got down-and-out, his old father bad him and his wife and children all shipped up here to live off the family. I hear his folks pay him seventy dollars a month. Seventy dollars a month more'n he's worth!"

Cray said, against the hubbub of the approaching Guards: "I hear he had quite a record in the regular army."

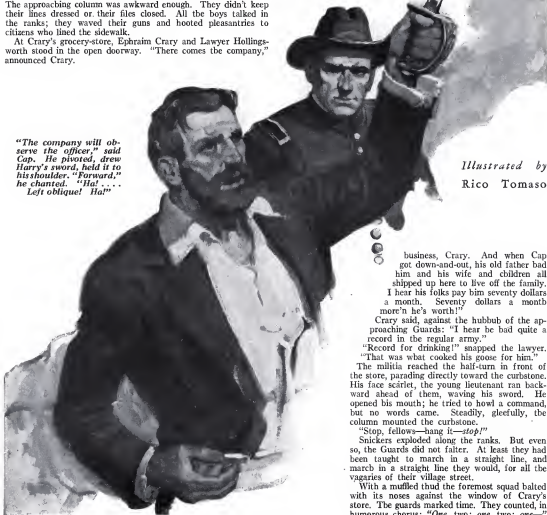
"Record for drinking!" snapped the lawyer. "That was what cooked his goose for him."

The militia reached the half-turn in front of the store, parading directly toward the curbstome. His face scarlet, the young lieutenant ran backward ahead of them, waving his sword. He opened his mouth; he tried to howl a command, but no words came. Steadily, gleefully, the column mounted the curbstome.

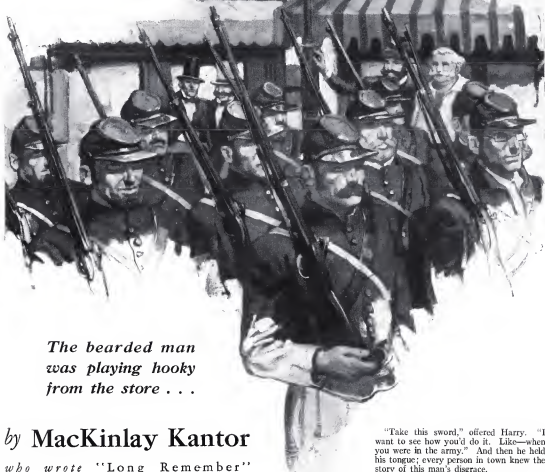
"Stop, fellows—hang it—stop!"

Snickers exploded along the ranks. But even so, the Guards did not falter. At least they had been taught to march in a straight line, and march in a straight line they would, for all the vagaries of their village street.

With a muffled thud the foremost squad baled with its noses against the window of Cray's store. The guards marked time. They counted, in humorous chorus: "One, two; one, two; one—"



Legions



*The bearded man
was playing hooky
from the store . . .*

by MacKinlay Kantor

who wrote "Long Remember"

The boy officer slammed his sword into its scabbard. He stood with eyes blazing, fists clenched.

"Think you're smart, don't you? Well, I'll lick you for this, one at a time! Just because I didn't know the proper—"

Lawyer Hollingsworth recovered from his laughter enough to thrust his face past the door-jamb. "Harry, why'n't you ask Cap to help you?"

The youth's eye followed his indication: that squat figure on the upended barrel by the leather-store.

"I guess I will," he said decisively. "Cap ought to know, anyway. —Column—*kalt*," he told his army, and crossed the street.

Cap climbed down from his perch.

The lieutenant prayed: "Cap, will you help me out?"

Whisky breathed in a faint perfume. "Certainly, Harry," said Cap. "What seems to be the trouble?" His voice was calm, level; and again the young militiaman felt a queer respect rising in his mind—the respect which was so abated when applied to a ne'er-do-well like Cap.

"You see, the street bends a little. It isn't a right-angular turn. I couldn't wheel 'em completely to the right or left—"

The bearded face moved in a nod of understanding.

"Take this sword," offered Harry. "I want to see how you'd do it. Like—when you were in the army." And then he held his tongue; every person in town knew the story of this man's disgrace.

Cap accepted the sword and buckled the sword-belt over his shabby coat. He walked out into the street.

"Fall out!" he ordered. And then: "The company will form, in column, ten paces in front of me."

They got into line, still snickering. This was odd, being ordered about by such a man as Cap. But there was something—

"The order for a half-turn is 'Left oblique,' or 'Right oblique.' It is followed by a command of execution. The company will observe the officer."

He pivoted, drew Harry's sword, and held it to his shoulder. "Forward," he chanted. "Ha!" His left foot lifted. He paced steadily away from them. "Left oblique"—his voice seemed more crusty and alert than ever they had heard it—"Ha!"

He returned to the staring militia.

"You see how it goes. Now we'll try it back up the street."

He strode to the rear of the column, eyes fixed on nothingness. "Company—right-shoulder—Ha!" And they did that as their young officer had learned it from his Primary Manual.

"Company—right about—Ha!"

Now their eyes were staring into his blue ones, where little pink flames of whisky still danced. . . . They marched. It was a right oblique, this time, and they followed him very well.

Harry came up, full of admiration. (Please turn to page 89)



Illustrated by Frank Bensing

"I'm twenty-one," said Jackie. "We don't have to go to the chaplain: we can go to the town. Even to a justice of the peace. And once it was done—"



Second Best Man

by Charles L. Clifford

who wrote "Parade Ground"

Ever since Jackie could walk, she wanted to marry a soldier; but he had to be "the best man in A Troop."

"ONLY thing I can see is—well, not come near you any more."

She drew in her breath with a quick catch. "No!" she said. "No, Bill!"

He looked stubbornly away from her. She moved up closer to him. The blaze of the desert stars lighted her face, made sharp, bright points of the tears in her eyes. She reached up her hands toward his face.

"Only makes it worse," Bill Brock said harshly. "You oughta know soldiers. By this time, anyways. If they stays away from the tramp women, they aint got no business foolin' around with a decent one. It aint in them to stand it. Maybe you wouldn't understand."

"I'm not a fool!" Jackie Carney said, her voice-breaking fiercely. "And I've been running around with men—soldiers, ever since I could walk."

"Then you know," Bill Brock said heavily. "You must know how I feel. Walkin' nights in places like this, with them stars—them mountains all around with the snow on them. . . . An' sittin' in the movie with you, close to you. An' sometimes kissin' you—"

She watched him talk, her eyes soft, her lips trembling a little with the tenderness she felt. She said in a low voice: "But you're not just some kid recruit. You're a sergeant with service. Bill—"

She reached a hand up, and held to his shoulder.

"What?" Bill Brock said. "I'm twenty-one," said Jackie. "We don't have to go to the chaplain: we can go to the town. Even to a justice of the peace. We could just walk down there and do it. Who could stop us? And once it was done—"

"Ah!" Bill said. "Sure, once it was done! First off, your old man would walk me right up to the troop commander. He'd have the safety-razor blade right in his hand—"

"Safety-razor blade?"

Sergeant Brock laughed bitterly. "Sure. That's what they use to cut off the stripes."

"Dad wouldn't do that. He—"

Brock jerked his head fiercely at her. "Oh, no! Listen, kid: He may be Dad to you—over to your quarters. But first off, he's a top sergeant—of the old school, pre-war. Troop orders to him are like a Bible to a chaplain. Like the Ten Commandments. And you ought to know the Captain by now. I told you enough. They all got their fads, every troop commander in the army. And his is. no married men in his troop. Or only in emergency."



"Emergency? Well, how about us, then?"

Sergeant Brock coughed. "That aint what he means."

She took his arm, holding it fiercely. "He hasn't the right! Just because he's captain of a troop doesn't mean he owns a man's soul!"

"No," Brock said, "that's right. Nobody can stop a guy marryin'. You don't get the joker: order says a soldier must get the permission of his troop commander. That means talk to the top

sergeant first. Well, nobody's been given that permission yet in A Troop. Nobody ever will. An' another thing: Don't think this hasn't ever come into my bean. I thought of it lots of times. An' that old man of yours guessed it. He put it up to me—straight. He got me in a chicken-hearted moment. It was the day I got my sergancy. The Captain called me in an' told me what a great sound-off your old man gave him. That he was 'making' me from the other corporals because of his recommendation. I was proud of my stripes. First thing I thought of was you, Jackie. 'I can do it now, I kept thinkin'. I was almost singin' it. I wanted to run right over an' tell you. I thought a sergeant's stripes was enough."

He broke off, his mouth set in a bitter thin line. He looked up at the white bit of moon. Jackie held his arm close against her. "Yes," she said softly. "And I was so proud of you. A sergeant right at the beginning of your third hitch!"

"But it didn't do me no good," Brock said. "He got me out by the wash-house, your old man did. He put it up to me. I give him my word, Jackie, not to pull a fast one—to wait."

She was leaning hard against him now, sobbing softly. He looked away from her. He was bitter with the misery that filled his heart. They were standing by a time-worn bench, in the shadow of the rickety grandstand of the horse-show grounds. Sergeant Brock stared away toward the ragged outline of the post, past the officers' line and down to the long rows of barracks. Call to Quarters rang out low and prolonged from the guard-house. The clink of shod hoofs came, breaking in after the last long note of the call.

"We got to beat it," Brock said. "Guard comin'. Maybe one of them nosey guys that'd have a big story to tell in the barracks when he comes off, about you an' me up here. You know how soldiers are."

She drew out of his arm. She moved away wearily, toward the light of the post. She said in a low, bitter voice: "Sure. . . . Sure, I know how soldiers are."

SERGEANT BROCK was sitting on the barracks step. It was after Taps. Men snored behind him in the squadrooms, but he heard nothing of that. He was watching the blazing desert stars above him. He was dreaming. He could almost see those deep blue eyes of Jackie Carney up there among those stars.

But Jackie Carney's old man disturbed that dream—just as he had another. He called from the porch behind: "Come on, Brock—over to the shack. I think I got some beer cold. No drill; only late stables tomorrow."

They reached the non-coms' line and entered Sergeant Carney's quarters through the back door. They moved like two thieves in the night. "Old lady an' Jackie'll be asleep," Carney said. "Won't hear us in the kitchen if we chirp soft."

At mention of that name Sergeant Brock's heart made strange



movements in his harrel chest. He stepped even more softly. Carney laughed. "We don't have to hold our breaths! Mamie aint goin' to mind. It's only that kid; hear company, an' she'd be out here like a hullet. Kids need their rest."

"She's twenty-one," Brock said, wishing he had made the noise of a battery in action. Just a sight of Jackie Carney! He hadn't gone near her since that night. A week—it seemed a year ago!

THE top sergeant of A Troop opened two hottles of beer. No glasses—no old soldier would understand the use of glasses with a hottle of beer.

Carney wiped the top of his hottle with the heel of his hand. He looked over at his duty sergeant's glum face. "Hell, Brock—twenty-one's only a kid. She's got plenty of time. What did you know about what you wanted at twenty-one?" Brock looked down at his beer. "A woman's different," he said. "They know as much when they're twenty-one as they ever get to know."

A sharp gleam came into Sergeant Carney's hard gray eyes. "What you mean? Listen, Brock—you heen out with Jackie alone. I don't know a guy I'd sooner leave her go out with. I know you're on the level. But what you jest said—We're both of us good soldiers. You been in A Troop since you was a recruit. I know girls these days gets onto things—goes pretty far. They don't think nothin' of kissin' an' lovin' every man they goes out with." Carney had pushed his hottle of beer to one side and now held Brock's wrist in a grip of iron. "Tell me. One soldier to another. It won't make no difference between us. I swear to it, Brock!"

Sergeant Brock tore his hand from Carney's grasp. His light blue eyes blazed. "Cut that out!" he said fiercely. "Any other guy said that to me—I'd maul him till he was cat's-meat!"

Carney sat back. A new light came into his eyes. He drew a deep hreath and smiled. "Beer's gettin' warm," he said, and he thrust the slowly foaming top of his hottle into his big mouth.

Brock sat stiffly, watching him. His eyes were still hard. "Listen," he said in a low, shanking voice. "You had your questions now; an' you got your answer. Now I got mine to ask. An' I got my say to say."

"Drink your beer," Sergeant Carney said cheerfully. "My time's up end of this month," Brock said steadily. "I got two things I can do: I can't re-up. Needn't worry I can get a job on the outside. . . . Or I can take my three months' furlough an' find me another outfit a long ways from this Mexican border."

Carney slid the wet label on the beer hottle back and forth with his gnarled brown fingers. "You heen in A Troop since you was a recruit. Ten years. You aint goin' to do no fool thing like that, Brock."

"I'm tellin' the troop commander that, anyways."

Sergeant Carney's eyes rose slowly from the beer label. He looked at Sergeant Brock. "Why don't you drink your beer?" he said.

Brock drank his beer, all of it. "I think I got some cigars," Sergeant Carney said. "Coupla three left from the last smoker."

"I got my pipe," Brock said, and he filled and lit it.

"Now listen," Carney said. He puffed on his cigar. He looked through the smoke of it at Brock. "Listen: A kid like that—"

"She's twenty-one," Sergeant Brock said doggedly.

"She aint no different since she was fifteen," Carney said.

"Maybe not to you," Sergeant Brock said.

"I know this man's army—better than you. I seen it from



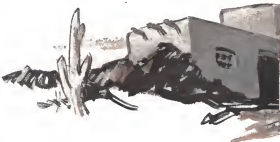
"You killed him!" she said. "You—" Her voice broke. "I only tapped him," said

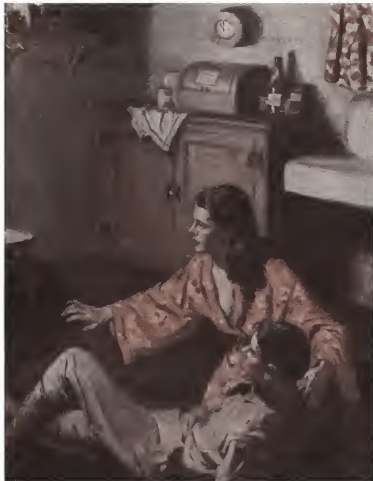
China an' the Islands, all around France, and up an' down this border. An' in all that time I aint yet seen a married man under the rank of top sergeant worth his clothing-allowance."

"I know, I know," Sergeant Brock said, puffing hard at his pipe. "You went an' told me several times before."

"An' I told you when you gets a diamond on your house-sleeve, it's okay with me," Carney said stiffly. "She'll be older then—"

Brock laughed harshly. "She'll be a hundred."





Carney. "He's comin' to, now. You beat it. Look at the way you're dressed!"

Carney waved a soothing hand. "I know they aint much promotion these days, but they's Bullitt in F Troop must be risin' sixty if he's a day. He's gotta go out, retire for age, in a few years. Then they's Black McCoy in B. I been hearin' that Cap'n Sutton's about fed up with him. He's hittin' the booze. You can see yourself what a rag-time outfit they got there."

"They got plenty duty sergeants too," Brock said.

"You got a fine rep in the regiment, Brock," Carney said soherly. "Your platoon won the Goodrich Trophy. You trained



the best enlisted man's mount in the Division horse-show. You're an expert pistol an' rifle. You—"

"Yeah. I'm everything except a good het as a son-in-law. I get it."

Old Carney winced before the heartiness of that sneer. He looked down at the beer-label, found it on a bias and straightened it meticulously. Then he looked up again at Brock. "Listen," he said. "You don't understand what it means to be the old man of a kid like Jackie. Seein' her grow up from a cradle an' totterin' around like a day-old fool. An' seein' the old woman washin' her in the tin tub—that was in the Islands, an' we had nothin' but a lousy nipa shack, an' a old oil-can to hring the water."

Brock jammed a finger into his dead pipe. He didn't look at Sergeant Carney.

Carney said: "An' seein' her grow up dressed in hits of old clothes the officers' women gave to Mamie, an' Mamie slavin' over a tub to keep things clean. Jest enough left after payday to eat careful on for the month. Nothin' for fun. Only once in a while some of the hoys would come over an' bring her a bag of candy or a hit of a cheap doll. She was cute even then. All the men liked her."

A strange tone had come into the old man's voice, and Brock couldn't stand it. Not from that roaring man who cursed and raised merry hell from barracks to stables and back again every day of the year.

"Got any beer left?"

"You see how it is," Carney said. "You know what you're makin'. A sergeant's pay in your third hitch. An' it wouldn't be like me an' Mamie: so don't go pullin' that one. Mamie never had nothin', but the kid's had the best of her life on a top sergeant's pay. She's been to all the schools. Through high school. More than you an' me put together. She'd be unhappy, Brock, livin' on a sergeant's pay."

A LONG silence followed. Old Carney relit his cigar. Brock stared at his dead pipe. Then, like an old man, he arose from the creaking barracks chair. "Okay," he said. There was a hard, dead sound in his voice. "I guess I see

it, all right. I get it. She's too good for me, because I'm a soldier. You got her lined up for one o' these pimply-faced civilians." He laughed. "Or maybe—one o' the officers. Well—"

"Would I of said 'when you get to be a top sergeant?'" Carney said, a sharp edge in his voice.

Again Brock laughed, in that same way. "You might jest as well said when I get to be President," he said bitterly.

Carney pushed away from the table, getting up as fast as he could manage his chair. The empty bottle beside him crashed to the floor. It rolled away, and Brock kicked it contemptuously with his foot.

"Brock!" Carney said. "Here—sit down. One more hittle—" The pleading in the old man's voice failed to move Brock. He hacked toward the door. "Maybe you mean it, Sergeant," he said. "But one thing: I never seen a soldier from a high school was worth his coat straps; an' dames is the same way, most likely. Yours probably got ideas. Maybe what you said came from her, an' I been too dumb to see it."

The old man's face darkened with anger. "Leave the kid out of your helly-achin'," he said harshly. "I been honest with you, Brock. I put it up to you square. I used to think you had guts—the makin' of a real top sergeant. Well, I guess I was wrong. Instead of goin' out an' workin' so every officer in the regiment will notice you an' want you for their troop, you jest lay down. You sit on the barracks steps mopin' like a sick cat. You aint got your mind on your drill. Only (Please turn to page 78)



The Friendly River

by

A. R. Beverley-Giddings

*It was the only
safe thing for
fools like them.*

Illustrated by Charles Chickerin

THE wide river dominated the landscape. Higher up, it emerged from subtropical forests to flow soundlessly through low banks clothed with the typical palm-like pines of the Florida flat lands. An occasional matted thicket arose island-like to mark a small area of rich, well-watered soil. At the foot of the pines there were dwarf palmettos, or huckleberry bushes, or low patches of myrtle, bayberry and gallberry. And on the left bank, where the river turned abruptly westward, a grove of orange and grapefruit trees.

The January day was warm and still. The grapefruit hung in pale yellow globes against the unstirring foliage. A faint heat haze eddied up from the sandy soil along the rows between the trees. It warmed and expanded the heavy fragrance of the fruit until the odor overflowed the grove and engulfed in a scented, effeminate wave the house set back from the river's bank. But on the bank itself the virile odors of the river prevailed.

The river was strong and friendly and constant. It was these qualities which stirred one, rather than its esthetic value to the otherwise monotonous landscape. The more primitive inhabitants of this quiet back-land could not have put into words the depth of their feeling for the river. But it existed in them, just as it did in Norma Croynton, who was erudite enough to be coherent.

She sat on the gallery of the rambling house, wrinkling her small nose a trifle against the heady fragrance of the grove. Far out on the sun-dappled stream a dot appeared. Very faintly she caught the sound or echo of a motorboat's exhaust. She threw a look at the declining sun, switched her gaze calculatingly to the speck on the river's placid bosom, got up and went inside the house.

She called: "Elley Lou!"

"Ma'am?" The reply came leisurely from the back yard.

Elley Lou was bathing. A wooden tub filled with tepid water and a foamy coating of suds stood on a pine block. She was naked save for a towel pinned around her waist, and the sun glistened on her warm brown skin. She plied the coarse sponge vigorously. Little rivulets of suds cascaded down over her firm young breasts. She was pagan and beautiful.

"Aint no men comin', is dey, Miss Norma?" she asked. But her smile belied the anxiety she had put into her voice.

"You've time to finish," Norma answered.

"Dis yere's Saddy night, and Ah got me a date," Elley Lou went on amiably. "Riveh done brought me a new boy. Ah aims to knock him col' tonight. Ah done bought me a bottle of new perfume. Now offen I had dat dress you promise' me—"

"Take it," Norma hurried on to the thought uppermost with her: "A new boy," she repeated.

"Yassum. Done wuk at de gun-club, runnin' de motah-boast."

"And George?"

"Whut I cah' 'bout dat no-count niggah?" Elley Lou tossed





When she withdrew from that long embrace, profoundly stirred, she heard Randolph's voice beyond her. "Norma!" he was saying. "Yes," she answered. Whether he had seen or not was unimportant.

her head defiantly. "Plenty like Gawge. Dis yere colored man is right pritty. An' he's fum de Norf. 'Clar' to gracious, Miss Norma, his mannehs an puffeck."

"Wach out," Norma retorted dryly.

"Yassum," Elley Lou assented mechanically. She shifted her scrubbing to one round thigh, then went on: "Hones', Miss Norma, dis yere colored man's got me dizzy. He's diff'runt. Aint no man aroun' beah lak him. Ah wish some day ol' riveh done bring you white man lak him."

"So romance has come to you," Norma answered derisively. "However, Father and Mr. Rand will be here in half an hour. Better start dinner as soon as you're dressed."

SHE went out on the front gallery. Away down-river the sun was dropping behind the pines. It cast a pathway of metallic, golden brilliance almost to her feet. The hoat was moving forward close inshore along the far bank. Then the sun sank out of sight, the sky glowed briefly, night set in. The exhaust of the heavy-duty engine became more distinct though the outlines of the hoat had been obliterated. If the river was ever strange, vaguely unfriendly, it was during this first starless hour of darkness, Norma thought. She got up restlessly from her chair and walked down the path. Then a match flamed, a lantern was lighted and hung in the bow of the hoat. It reassured her immediately.

"I'm nervous," she said aloud. Then she stopped abruptly and turned back toward the house. Elley Lou was singing a song of her own making, in a high, minor key: "*Riveh done sen' me a man!*"

Drawn to the kitchen against her will, Norma seated herself and watched Elley Lou disjoint the young chickens for the frying-pan. The quadrone continued her singing in a lower voice, obviously waiting for Norma to open the conversation, but gave in after a long, frowning silence on the part of her mistress.

"Whut ails you, honey?"

"Merely thinking, Elley Lou." She added hesitantly in a moment: "You don't find all men the same, do you?"

Elley Lou's rich low laugh bubbled out. "No'm, Ah shorely don't. Dey's men you can depen' on, like Mist' Rand. And dey's men yo' can't depen' on a-tall. Dey's awkward men whut give yo' de upper han', and dey's men who am boss fum de fust and mek yo' lak it. Dey's men who can talk yo' into anything, and dey's men who don't need to do no talkin'. Like dis man fum de Norf! I's weak as watch in his han's, I do declare, Miss Norma."

"What do you expect to get out of this philandering with the gun-club negro?" Norma demanded. "You don't expect him to marry you?"

"No'm, Ah don't," Elley Lou answered mildly. "He aint a

ma'yin' niggah; I done see that. But y'-all takes it too ser'us, Miss Norma."

"You'll marry George one of these days," Norma commented. "Yassum; 'spect I will. But Ah aims to have me some fun fust."

Norma got up quickly. "I see," she said. She turned away. "The men will be here any minute now."

"Yassum. It aint goin' to tak' me long to fry dis yere chicken. I done got sweet-potato puddin' in de oven dis minute." The loud cadence of a motor stopped her momentarily. She added: "Ah reckon dat's dem now."

Norma heard her father's voice as she hurried toward the gallery. He came up the steps, a tall, stooped, scholarly-looking man, laboring at the moment under some mild excitement. "Set another place, my dear," he called to her. "We have a guest—I mean, in addition to Randolph. An aviator. No, not the mail pilot—a sportsman pilot. He crashed in the scrub near where we were shooting. We spent the most of the afternoon salvaging the motor and instruments from the plane."

"Is he hurt?"
"Not at all. But I'll tell you about it later. Now I must get back to the boat. We are unloading the motor."

He strode off briskly.

NORMA stood for a minute listening to the murmur of the men's voices from the landing. She turned away thoughtfully. Elley Lou stood behind her.

"You heard?" Norma asked.

Elley Lou nodded.

"I'll fix the table myself."

"Yassum. Mebbe Ah bettah dust de bes' china."

"Yes."

Elley Lou lingered.

"Well?" Norma demanded.

"P'raps," Elley Lou replied slowly, "ol' riveh done bring yo' a man, just lak he bring me. Ef so—"

"If so—what?"

Elley Lou fell back a step. "Nuttin'," she mumbled.

"What?" Norma insisted.

"Well"—defiantly—"I wuz jus' gwine say it don't do to be too cold to a gif' de ol' riveh sen' yo'."

Norma smiled. "You're being ridiculous," she said. . . .

The young flying man was blond and assertive. His finely cut features were almost feminine in their beauty and delicacy. But the suggestion of effeminacy stopped with his face. He was big-framed, wide-shouldered, and moved with the easy sureness of the athlete. His name was Wade Howlett; he was from New York. This was the third plane he had cracked up, he told them with a laugh. Rank carelessness on his own part. A motor needs oil occasionally.

At this remark Randolph's rugged, good-natured face creased into a faintly derisive grin.

"Reckon I'd have more regard for my own skin," he said, "than to neglect looking at my oil before I took off, even if my pocket-book didn't worry me."

There was resentment in the quick glance Norma threw at him. Obviously, she thought after a moment's consideration, in which she tried to be fair to both, Howlett was a woman's man. Randolph was not impressed by him; her father was merely his usual courteous self. They had not warned to Howlett. Polite though both were, they were shutting him out as alien. She wondered vaguely what he lacked in their eyes.

Her father said pleasantly: "It's all so casual to you, Mr. Howlett. You use a plane as I would a motor-car."

Howlett laughed again—a satisfied, comfortable laugh. He leaned back in his chair; his eyes swept across the table and fastened on Norma's face. To her, there was actual impact in his look. It shocked her, thrilled her. She thought, as she had thought a dozen times in the last hour: "He's terribly attractive. No man should have eyes and lashes like that." Equally, she liked his suavity, the practised deftness he brought to bear to interest her amorously. She knew that he had approved of her from the moment of the introduction, just as he knew she had approved of him. The attraction on both sides had been immediate, intense, almost chemical in its working. Thinking of these things, her eyes dropped away from his; she reddened. At once Randolph's lazy Southern voice took control of the conversation. He had mistaken her delicious confusion for shyness. He was protecting her—as usual. She thought with a sudden wild sense of irritation: "To hell with your chivalry! What if I don't want to be protected?"

Because the feeling of irritation remained with her, she said after a time: "Father, you have asked Mr. Howlett to spend the night?"

"I was going to drive him to the railroad," Randolph put in slowly. "He thought he'd like to get the night train to Jacksonville."

"It's just as Mr. Howlett wishes," Professor Croynton put in gently. "We should be delighted to have him remain."

"I'd like to stay, if it won't inconvenience you," Howlett remarked. "The fact is, I'm feeling a little jittery." His glance confided in Norma that this was merely a pleasant fiction. She said casually, "That's settled, then," striving to eliminate the intimate sense of conspiracy her words had created between the two of them. Randolph said nothing. The Professor arose and pushed back his chair. "We might try the gallery," he suggested. "The night is warm."

Outside, some of the heat of the day still lingered. The earth exhaled its honest fragrance. But the odor of the grove pressed down. It was sugary sweet; it made the night feminine, sensuous, provocative. The sky was dotted with stars, but they were without brilliance. Later they would brighten; later the moon would rise to make the back-land mystical. But now on the gallery the darkness was intense.

Norma seated herself on the porch swing. The springs creaked and gave, creaked and gave again. She did not move away from the shoulder that pressed hers. Randolph, seated on the steps, was talking with her father. They were discussing the morning's shooting. Their voices were round, warm, friendly—different from Howlett's, as he talked to her. There was an urgency in his, a subdued stridency. She was not alarmed. The emotional interchange was not of words but of physical contact. And the night hid that.

RANDOLPH'S voice broke in on her thoughts: "Gun-club boat is coming down the river. Headin' in. You-all expecting anyone?"

The sharp, rattling exhaust of the speed-boat was abruptly hushed to a murmur. Norma said: "It's for Elley Lou."

Randolph laughed. "I saw that gun-club nigro cot'in' Elley Lou in the village the other day."

Elley Lou came around the side of the house, preceded by the long beam of a flashlight. Randolph called to her: "I want to get a message down to old Mr. Foster at the club. Elley Lou. Reckon your friend would deliver it?"



George waded into the river, picked up the negro and deposited him on the dock.

"What I do now, Miss Norma?"



He jerked erect, listening. "What is it?" she murmured. He answered: "Some one coming. No one would understand."

"Yassuh, Mist' Rand. Be proud to, Mist' Rand. I sen' him up yere to de house."

Randolph rose. "Don't bother. I'll walk down with you."

"We might take a short walk too," Howlett suggested. His tone was casual, but his hand was on Norma's arm, urging her upward. She arose. They descended the steps and walked toward the river, quartering away from the others. He locked his arm in hers; they walked close together. When the ground was uneven, there were abrupt contacts of shoulders, thighs and knees. Currents were set up which vibrated in her, tautening her as a how-string is taut.

Then the river was at their feet—dim, mysterious, quiet. There was a little song in Norma, Elley Lou's song: "*River done sen' me a man.*" Acquiescently she turned at the pressure on her shoulder, lifted her face. The kiss lay warm and poignant on her lips. "You're beautiful," he whispered. "And you," she answered fervently. "More beautiful."

She drew him to the shadow of a pine, and lifted her face again.

When she withdrew from that long embrace, breathless, profoundly stirred, she heard Randolph's voice beyond her. "Norma," he was saying. "Norma." Turning, she saw him approach. "Yes," she answered. Whether he had seen or not was unimportant. "Yes," she said again.

He answered quietly, without emotion: "Let's go back to the house."

"Yes," she assented. They walked abreast to the gallery. Howlett talked with Randolph meanwhile. His voice was overfriendly. . . .

The evening ebbed away, filled with desultory conversation which held no meaning for Norma. At eleven o'clock the Professor arose. "Good night," he said. He extended a hand to Randolph and Howlett in turn with gentle old-fashioned courtesy. "Come when you are ready. I've had a rather strenuous day for an old man." He left the room. They heard him ascend the stairs.

"You will have your usual room, Rand," Norma remarked.

He glanced at her quickly. She raised calm eyes to his face.

"I was thinking," he answered slowly, "of letting Mr. Howlett have that room. I wouldn't mind the sleeping-po'ch." (Please turn to page 108)

The Swift and Powerful Climax of

This WOMAN and this MAN



The Story Thus Far:

VIRGILIA DICCON was like that Wyoming hand of her birth: savage, virgin, difficult to know. The man, Oliver Glenn, was an Easterner, come to Wyoming on a hunting-trip. And when his guide Ed Carter suffered an accident, he brought the injured man to the cabin where Virgilia lived with her father.

But a physician was urgently needed if Ed's life was to be saved. Old Diccon set out for town and help; but it was a two-day journey, and Ed grew rapidly worse. Glenn insisted, over Virgilia's violent protest, on getting young Dr. Krane, the son of a neighbor, though he had been told that an old tragedy had left the Diccons with a bitter hatred of Benjamin Krane and his physician son.

The two men moved Ed to the Krane house, where he could have the professional care he needed. . . . And next day there came to Glenn a message from New York: his wealthy Aunt Leone was dying; and Kay—lovely little Kay Winter, to whom he was all but engaged—asked him to come back at once.

Glenn made ready to set out next morning; and—he took Virgilia in his arms and kissed her. . . .

"I'll come back to you, Virgilia. I swear to God I will. You're beautiful, Virgilia. Remember I was the first to teach you that."

But in New York, Glenn saw Kay Winter again; and their engagement became a fact. Then his Aunt Leone's will was read and Oliver found himself cut off with a mere thousand dollars instead of the large legacy everyone had expected he would receive.

He found a poor job in a department-store office; and stuck at it during the winter until—Pony Krane dropped in to see him one evening. Young Dr. Krane bore a letter from his father, suggesting that Glenn join him in a dude-ranching scheme. And young Krane brought the news that Virgilia was living alone—for her father had cut himself severely with an ax; and though Virgilia had perforce overcome her hate and summoned Dr. Krane to care for him, though Krane had himself given the wounded man a transfusion of his own blood, Virgil Diccon had died. . . .

Next evening Oliver went to Kay Winter and told her of Virgilia—and Kay at once released him. So Oliver Glenn left his job, and went a second time to Wyoming, and Virgilia Diccon and he were married.

Shortly afterward the elder Krane began to urge his dude-ranching scheme on Glenn; and the Easterner, seeing no possibility of otherwise earning a living on the remote Diccon ranch, fell in with the plan.

Virgilia, in the endeavor to dissuade him, told him more of that old tragedy that was the basis of her blind hatred: Krane and her father had been partners; and then—"After Ben Krane's own woman began to lose her wits, he was most always at our ranch. He talked my father out of his happiness. My mother, she went away and lived with Ben.

"Then, in winter, when I was ten years old, one morning one of our horses came into the corral with a paper tied to him. It was a letter, like, from Mother. My mother said that Ben was cruel to her, that she loved her Virgil and was sick for missing him, and her little Jill. . . . And then we heard a sudden crying—a scream, like, My father said: 'I am going up yonder to fetch your mother home.'"

"He took his gun and went. "Up there a light was burning; and Ben Krane, he met him as he come in at the door. He took my father in to see my mother. She was dead in her room, laying on her bed with her eyes all wide open. The crazy woman had gone in there and killed her."

In spite of this story, Glenn went ahead with Krane in the dude-ranching scheme, although he promised Virgilia she need not take part in it or meet Ben Krane. . . . The paying guests from the East began to arrive. Then one night Virgilia warned Glenn that Ben Krane was working slyly against him. Indeed Oliver had begun to realize this himself, and there was an open quarrel between the two men, patched up after a fashion temporarily. What Glenn did not know was that Krane had reason to believe there was gold on the

this Epic of the Present Day West



Virgilia whipped off her jacket, flapped it before her, and came at the big beast, top speed, screaming like a maniac.

by
**Katharine
Newlin
Burt**

Illustrated by Jules Gotlieb

Diccon land; to get it he planned to induce Glenn to go armed, to provoke a quarrel, to let Glenn draw first and then— He himself was lightning-fast with a gun.

But it all came about otherwise. One day after a storm Virgilia was walking along a narrow steep trail on her own land—and caught sight of Ben Krane working with a pickax. He came toward her, threatening, failing to see where the trail was undermined by the great bole left by a tree new-fallen in the storm.

Virgilia spoke slowly:

"If you move six more steps forward, Ben Krane, I tell you, surely, you will be a dead man. It won't be Oliver; it won't be me; it will be—God Almighty, Ben!"

He thought she was threatening him with a gun, as indeed on another occasion she had. He started toward her and began to count in a high nasal mockery.

"One—" he said, his eyes on her colorless stony face. "And two and three—and four—don't move, Virgilia!" . . . His voice

lifted to a yell; he tried to leap back. There was a running roar—the earth seemed to buck under him. Rocks, trees, red clay all flung themselves about, below, above him, and lifted him and flung him down. . . . The stones went roaring, rolling over the face of the white, steady falls.

Virgilia told the story to Oliver; and a brooding horror of her savagery, as it seemed to him, possessed him in the days that followed. So when a message came to him that the other heirs were seeking to break his Aunt Leone's will and asking his aid, he set out at once for New York. . . . And young Dr. Krane, who longed for Virgilia, thought he saw his chance now. (*The story continues in detail:*)

AFTER a lifetime of bachelor monotones, Cousin George Maddox, in his dim little old New York "rooms," was in a condition bordering on frenzy over what he spoke of as the "impending litigation." He trotted about making circles round Oliver,

and talked so fast that his words blundered one on top of the other.

"I am not denyin', young Oliver, that you might go ahead on your own, you know. There was that will, destroyed by her own hands—possibly under undue influence, possibly not—which, I desay, left you the lion's share—*Leone's* share—not bad, eh? But it's dubious and a far more difficult piece of litigation, the lawyers tell us. What I'm trying to get across is that you'd have a damn' slim chance of getting your lion's share, whereas the whole eight of us—or ten, if you include Gertie and Will, working together—or, that is, the eight working together against those two—"

Oliver broke in on this spate of words.

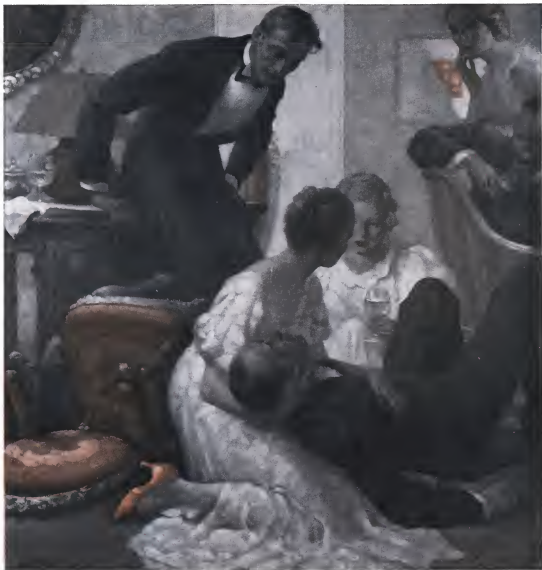
"I understand, Cousin George. I've entirely given up my lion's share. I know now what it's like to be cut off from an inheritance. I am decidedly Gascon in my sentiments now: 'One for all and all for one.'"

"Well, that's very white of you. Very coöperative. And as I say, one-eighth of a loaf is better than no bread."

"How long will it be before we—"

"If you knew as much about litigation as I do, my boy, you'd just forget the time element. Perhaps when we've got all the necessary papers drawn up for signatures, it'd be safe for you to go West—for a time."

Oliver went down from the rooms, which were part of a converted old dwelling-house on Tenth Street, and turning up Fifth Avenue, walked leisurely. He had presented himself to George Maddox as an impatient bridegroom, but his actual mood was more that of a tired, gentle old man. New York seemed to him a tranquil place, its speed of traffic and of pedestrians being negligible in comparison to the speed and intensity of his own life since he had left it six months before. His small hotel bedroom with the neat tiled bath adjoining was as congenial to his jangled nerv-



At the crash of his fist against Lew's jaw, Oliver was conscious of fierce delight. "Oliver," Kay gasped, "you are a beast!"

ous system as a monk's cell to a worldling "in retreat." He dined with friends, went to the musical and dancing shows, allowed himself to be entertained—for now he was, after all, a country cousin!—attended to the "impending litigation" and sat with Kay before her tiny open fire whose logs sent up little pale flames and fell away to delicate ash with no more protest than a whisper.

In that pretty rose-and-cream reception-room at first Oliver had flushed and fidgeted, remembering. But Kay was able to reassure his embarrassment, so friendly was she, so gay and natural and debonair. It was a delight to sip and smoke, with or without Lewis Farrant and her other friends, and listen to the inconsequential near-gossip of their city chatter. And so presently he forgot his own recent gravity of pine and rock, and began to talk, remembering suddenly such conversational material as new hooks, new music, new plays, new people, new scandals and even politics, finance and crime. He could not keep Wyoming matters above subconsciousness. They fell languidly away as into deep and clouded water. Virgilia herself, though he woke sometimes calling to her from a wild and urgent dream, had become incredibly remote, a ghost woman beyond the West. He hardly realized the swift smooth passage of the days. Then, abruptly it seemed to Oliver, there was Christmas.

THE city woke from a prolonged hazy Indian summer to a flurry of snow, gone before it was actually experienced; star flakes turning in the city air. Oliver, uneasy at the season's associations, wired "Love regrets, wishes" and spent more than he could afford on gifts for a ranch girl. His mind began to ache as though its anesthesia were wearing off. Returning from the post office, where in a cheerful line he had carried his packages for mailing, he started toward Kay's tea-table.

She had another guest: Oliver in the little hallway recognized Lew Farrant's hat and overcoat. He laid down his own. "Darling, darling!" He could not help but hear Lewis, for the door was open, and there were only curtains between. "If you'd only give me what I want for Christmas!" A faint sound—unmistakable.

Then Kay: "Lewis, I'd like to. Perhaps—soon I will."

"Oh, Kay, have a heart! Be Santa Claus. Perhaps we'll get off for that West Indian honeymoon in January!"

Oliver stood, his Indian summer frozen. He did not know what was going on beneath the ice of this disclosure. Kay and Lewis—a honeymoon! She would be going out of his life, taking away from him the ease and gaiety and coolness that had been healing to his mind.

He slipped into his coat again and left on tiptoe, holding his breath. He was feeling nothing; but somewhere high up in his brain his thoughts were running like a little cold-hearted moh, in panic. Thoughts they remained, however, and not feelings, he had no feelings any more. But he knew, with a hurried, multitudinous certainty, that he desired only the peace and coolness of little sensation. No Olympian was he, Oliver Glenn, but a small and cockney soul, happy for tea-table and for friendliness. He must climb down, indeed he had already climbed down, from that great heady altitude: love and hate, terror and ecstasy. He knew at last, at this instant, himself, "his real self," as Kay had justly warned him. Easier by far, for his cold, facile spirit, to renounce splendor, and Virgilia, than to give up prettiness and Kay. Simply he would not be able, with any degree of sanity, to endure now the loss of Kay out of his life. Valetudinarian he was, and she his trained attendant! Surely she loved him best and most, in her slight delicate fashion of loving.

He was so occupied with his convictions that he went straight back to his hotel without the slightest awareness of his body's way, and sat down there at the desk and wrote out the mental truth of him to that ghost robber, Virgilia. It was a long, resolute letter, implacable. He showed her what he was, and confessed himself incapable of her exaltations. Not so simply did he write as was her due, but he wrote honestly, according to the conviction that was upon him.

"I have been your man in name; Virgilia; but I am not your man by nature. Your man must be a bigger, simpler, better fellow. Some one like your father. He'll make you happy, and he'll understand."

That was the clearest and the simplest paragraph. There were other sentences as intricate as George Meredith's, where the little cold-hearted moh of intellectual opinions had their say. But simple or elaborate, it was written, signed and stamped and sealed. Oliver laid it aside, however, with one other to Wyoming. "I'll mail them when I come back again—from Kay," he told himself, not knowing why he did not mail them instantly.

He went down, slid some other letters into the box, beckoned

Virgilia went every day to her red rock. . . . Longing for Oliver, the touch, the sight, the warmth and nearness of him, crushed her heart slowly.



to a taxicab. He'd get back to Kay in time for cocktails, stay for dinner, and sitting out any others that evening, which was Christmas Eve, he would confess himself to her. If she would have him, if she would have him, he would come down from his Virgilia—from Moon Mountain country, from the terrible beauty of snow and rock and pine, of wandering river-music and blue shining air, come back to smallness and security, to city walls and ways. Lewis Farrant, in short and in fact, should not have this girl.

IN Jackson, Pony waited until, having met with Tom Toggin's widowed daughter about to start up-country, he was sure that Virgilia would not be coming down herself. He then arranged, by wire and letter, for the care of his Denver practice, bought winter supplies, sent East for hooks and engaged a seat on the mail stage driving north that day in the teeth of fine and icy snow. At the foot of the Deep Crystal ranger's trail, he loaded the sledge always left there for such purposes, and in snowshoes worked heavily up the long narrowing valley toward his Moon Cañon home. He reached it, revived himself with whisky and with fire, crept in under a mountain of blankets, and slept well.

Next day, deliberate as bear or sloth, he prepared for hibernation. He had his laboratory, his medical books, paper and pen. He would write the monographs on the influences of climate upon infection he had so long intended to write. Not until the smoke of his chimneys had warmed the air and drifted neighborly to mingle with the smoke of Virgilia's chimneys, did he put on his webs again and cut the singing storm with his narrow hody, persistent, going down to visit Virgilia.

Griffith Krane was not only a lover but a trained physician. He had diagnosed the fever in young Glenn's escaping face. Now, at the first look, he saw that Virgilia was suffering from a sickness of the soul. Nor did it escape his hight-surfaced secret eyes that his own return increased her suffering, that he was a sort of ghost penance, being the son of Benjamin. But as the days passed and he kept carefully to his appointed tasks, meeting her only casually on their cloudy trails or coming to her door on some well-chosen pretext of mail-delivery or to borrow a necessary tool, he became an accepted part of her preoccupation, and presently was admitted into the still circle of her pain. . . .

Tom and his daughter, who helped Virgilia cook, ate with her in the Glenn cabin. It was only natural that Pony, at first by a chance invitation from Mary, then by tacit inclusion, should share their evening meal. Afterward, when the two caretakers had gone across the stream to their own quarters, Pony, absorbed in a book, was able to prolong his visit, almost; it seemed, without Virgilia's noticing the change. Perhaps she was even grateful for the quiet hobgoblin presence of him. (Please turn to page 63)

Headline Henry

THEY called him "Headline Henry," behind his back. That was because he was a member, of pensionable tenure, of that silent group of hunchbacked men who sit around horseshoe-shaped tables in the local-rooms of newspaper offices—that small silent isolated world of paste-pot and shears and sharp-pointed pencils.

Peering forth timidly from beneath his green eyeshade, Henry looked just like the rest of them; and his gaze traveled over the local-room with the same indifference with which most of his fellows viewed the room. No, the difference in Henry wasn't obvious. It lay in the fact that Henry had coddled a nagging wife for longer years than most men coddle—even newspaper men. He was thinking about her now, little fragmentary thoughts that deepened the creases between his eyes and the perpendicular lines which framed his thin lips.

His dutiful pencil traced words before him.

WIFE LOSES PLEA FOR MORE ALIMONY

As he tossed the story over to the man,—the "boss of the copy desk,"—Henry let his silent content fall into the same style head.

"DAMN! GLAD SHE DID" SAYS NAGGED HUBBY

A faint smile as he counted the letters for the next head. Most times he didn't need to count. Henry Welsh hadn't been a copy-reader for twenty years in vain.

Another batch of "short" news items with heads deftly applied, and he slipped into his coat and hurried out into the street.

It was snowing, the first snow of the winter. He framed the fact in a neat headline.

FIRST SNOW FLURRIES WHITEN CITY STREETS

On the trolley car now—again writing heads. It worried him sometimes, this habit of couching all life in clipped phrases. He stared at a couple across the aisle in the car. The man, suave and derby-hatted, was whispering to a naïve young girl. Probably selling her an idea, Henry thought. Men who wear yellow chamois gloves and carry canes are like that.

YOUNG HEIR WOOS CLERK AT 5 AND 10

His mind discarded the head as trite, hackneyed.

SHEIK'S HOT WORDS LURE SCHOOLGIRL

No—too lurid. . . . His corner had arrived. He would have to leave the young couple to their fate—headless, as it were.

Headlines, like tombstones, tell what lies beneath. They must be written in keeping with the policy of the paper. Words like "Sex" and "Love Nest" were for tabloids. His paper would have none of them.

He fitted the key in the lock and wondered what humor his wife would be in. How many husbands fitting door-keys in locks, since the invention of door-keys and locks, have wondered the same thing?

She was irate. He had forgotten to pay the gas-bill, and a collector had come to the house.

"Of course, anything for the house you can't be expected to remember," she shrieked as he came in shaking the snow from his shoes. "What do you care if I'm humiliated by having collectors come to the house? And not enough money to pay them! Do you hear? Not enough money to pay a two-dollar-and-eighty-five-cent gas-bill—not even a measly two dollars and eighty-five cents in the house! That's what a good provider you turned out to be!"

Her voice was a shrill scream.

IRATE WIFE HURLS IRON

What if she did? Strangely enough, he wished she would. Couldn't make a head out of "IRATE WIFE HURLS PHRASES"—no punch to a head like that. "IRON"—there you had something substantial.

"I'm sick of you, anyway—sick and tired of you." His wife was screaming again. "I don't know why I ever married you."

WIFE WONDERES WHY SHE EVER MARRIED

A slow smile over that. He'd soon get fired if he tried heads like that on the paper. He visualized the expression on the man in the slot if he handed over a head like that. He was still smiling when he walked into the living-room, where his wife sat with eyes blazing.

"Haven't you anything to say?" she demanded. "Do you have to stand there like a ninny?"

NAGGING WIFE DEMANDS REPLY

No, he couldn't very well say that, so he remained silent. Impassively he seated himself.

"All right, don't say anything," she kept on, insistent, strident. "Maybe you're ashamed of yourself. Maybe you're ashamed because you're so worthless. Other men manage to get along. Other men manage to support their wives, and buy cars, and radios, and go to shows. That's what other men do; but you—you! I hate you! I hate the sight of you. Why did you bother to come home? Why don't you get another woman and stay away from here?"

FAITHFUL HUSBAND FLEES FROM WIFE

Every day he got worse, he decided silently. Imagine a head like that. Try to get that by and see what would happen.

"Go ahead and sit there like a grinning ape," she shouted, pushing her hair back from her forehead with an impatient gesture. It was aluminum blonde, created by hand. Cheap, flashy, imitation rings were on her pudgy fingers—gewgaws from her chorine days.

FORMER FOLLIES GIRL WEDS NEWSPAPER MAN

That was the head he wrote in his mind when they were married ten years ago—ten years of nagging and fault-finding and bickering. And that time she ran off with another man. . . . He'd managed to keep that quiet—and he'd taken her back, too.





"All right, don't say anything," she shouted. "Go ahead and sit there like a grinning ape!"

SPOUSE FORGIVES PENITENT WIFE

That was the head he wrote that time. She wouldn't have come back, either, if that other man had had any money. He knew that. He was nobody's fool.

FOLLIES GIRL DESERTS BANKRUPT BROKER-LOVER

Here she was, screaming again.

"Why didn't you pay that gas-bill? Have you any excuse? No, you know damn' well you haven't. It's a wonder we have a roof over our heads. Oh, if I had only stuck to the stage! I must have been drunk the night I married you."

He got up, a queer, twisted smile on his face, and stalked to the kitchen. Opening the cellar door, he switched on the light, and hurried down the steps.

Fury possessed him. He'd put up with her nagging long enough. This was the end. He grasped a hammer which was lying on a work-bench before him, and turned and ran up the stairs. His eyes were bloodshot. The hand that clenched the hammer was trembling.

He'd show her. He'd bash out her brains—the ungrateful wench.

HUSBAND IN FURY KILLS WIFE WITH HAMMER

No, what in the world was the matter with him? *Hammer* was a six-letter word. He needed a two-letter word. He turned and ran down the cellar steps again. Frantically, he searched the work-bench, scattering and spilling tools in his frenzy.

"I need an ax," he muttered under his breath.

HUSBAND IN FURY KILLS WIFE WITH AX

There was no ax there.

Disgustedly he threw the hammer among the tools and trudged stolidly back upstairs.

*He could not help but frame
all life in neat headlines.*

by Evelyn Shuler

Illustrated by Alan Foster

King's X

When you are playing a game and you get King's X, you can't be "it."

There are no kids in this story, and the action is laid at a police station, not in a nursery, but nevertheless . . .

by

Wallace Smith

JACOB VALENTIN



"If you guys are so bright," he says, "why not stake yourselves to a rod and jimmy, and grab off some of this soft dough?"

THERE were just three towns, if you were a newspaper man in those days: Chicago, of course; Denver was another. The way it used to be, sooner or later the Denver reporters came through Chicago—that is, the good ones did. They could drink, those Denver boys could. And it was no time at all before they got acquainted in the old Red Light district and chummy with collectors, madams, wrong coppers and the like. Yes sir, they had the gift. Afterward they'd move on, and you'd hear of them turning up for a while in places like Cleveland and New Orleans. Chicago reporters didn't travel much. After Chicago, where was there for a newspaper man to go?

I'm put in mind of this (continued the old reporter) by something happened a long time ago. I won't tell you to stop me if you've heard this one, because it's better'n a cinch you haven't. Only a few of us knew the facts, and you'll see why we didn't go around making silly cracks about it. It was this way:

We were sitting in the squad-room of one of the old stations on the lobster watch. It was about two o'clock in the morning, and one of those soft spring nights like we get in the old town. Make you think of boyhood days in the country, or your best girl, if you got things like that in your record. Our papers had all been put to bed, without much help from us. It had been a quiet night: a few stick-ups, a warehouse robbery, and some punk of a pool hustler knocked off in a gang brawl. Just routine stuff.

So we sat around the squad-room, chewing the rag and passing the bottle. I remember it was a bottle of C-&G. Ever hear of it? The initials stood for the name of the distillers. We used to call it Calvary-and-Graceland. Those were two cemeteries, and it was considered comical to order it that way. It was good whisky.

Usually, we didn't do things like that. Liquor in the squad-room, I mean. Maybe this night it was account of the night being so kind of dreamy and all. Or maybe it was account of the Dutchman across the alley having closed early. Anyway, we were doing it, and I always figured it made a lot of difference in this come-off I'm telling you about.

Like I say: we were sitting around and gabbing. Every once in a while the fire-box would sound an alarm. Or the desk-sergeant would wander in with a report off the blotter for Lieutenant—Noonan. We'll name him that; his real name was different. He was in command of the station that night, the Lieutenant was, and he was sitting in with us. They called Noonan a square copper, and I guess he was. Noonan was sitting in with us; with me and Larkin of the *Trib* and Sload of the *Inter-Ocean*. I was on the *Chronicle* then. And there was this fellow from Denver, covering beat for the *Herald*. He called himself Tover. We didn't know much about him, except where he came from, and he was a good newspaper man. And that was enough.

There were some little stories got around about this fellow Tover. I don't know how they started, and I set them down as gossip. Funny about reporters, isn't it? You'd think they'd get enough wild rumors on the day's run. But they're as gossipy as a sewing-circle of old maids, and sentimental as a tea-cen valentine.

Maybe Tover's looks had something to do with it. He reminded you right off of the guy in these detective stories on whom the suspicion is cast in about the third chapter. He looked something like this *Don Quixote* would've looked in a checkered cap. Generally he was about as gay as an embalmer's assistant. But

Illustrated by

D'Alton Valentine



The dame looked like she had been crying, Sload said; and Tover pretended that he didn't know Sload.

"Like I could've made any mistake about that cap of his," said Sload, telling me about it. "A guy that'd muf that lid would overlook the stockyards on a July afternoon. And the dame was a real looker, even after crying. And you know, usually, what a few weeps do to a red-head's looks."

Sload built up quite a yarn about it. He was good at that kind of thing. He got to be a rewrite man through having this knack. I didn't pay much attention to his story, although I figured there was a woman mixed up in it somewhere. With Tover, I mean. But what of it? There usually is.

This night I'm talking about, Tover sat listening to the gab. He never talked much; and this night he didn't break the rule. Now and then he'd give us that sudden smile. He wasn't drinking, either. That was another thing about him that was kind of peculiar.

Naturally there was some talk about dames, like there will be at an intellectual *soirée* like that. And also about different city editors, and the salaries that fellows on other papers were supposed to be getting. Finally, of course, we get around to crime. You'd think a bunch of police reporters would rather chin about anything else in the world, wouldn't you? Talk about a "bus-conductor on a holiday." There's no gang like newspaper men to talk shop.

BEFORE anyone knows how it all started, Sload and Larkin are riding Lieutenant Noonan, and Noonan is all burned up. It may've been some crack Larkin made that gets the Lieutenant winging. Because he could take it, ordinarily, Noonan could. Or it may've been account of the crime wave we'd been playing up in his district the week before. The Chief had had him on the carpet for that. Anyway, Noonan is plenty heated.

Larkin makes some crack like this:

"It's not because crooks are so clever," Larkin says; "because they aint. It's because coppers are so dumb. Nothing personal, of course, Lieutenant."

"Of course not," says Noonan. "I only been wearing my star about twenty years to have some supposed-to-be wise guy tell me all coppers are saps. Nothing personal about that. Oh, no!"

When he sees the Lieutenant starting to run a temperature, Sload declares himself in.

"Don't get up on your ear, now," Sload says.

"Who's getting up on whose ear?" says Noonan. "It's only I hate to hear a mere reporter shoot off his lip about honest policemen."

"What do you mean—honest policemen?" says Sload.

"Just do you mean—mere reporter?" says Larkin.

"What I say," Noonan says. "If it wasn't for reporters, playing up a few everyday homicides and a bombing or two, there wouldn't be any crime-wave."

"If it wasn't for reporters," Sload says, "half your mysteries would never get solved."

"Ha-ha," says Noonan sarcastically. "You make me laugh. Ha-ha."

Well sir, one word sort of leads to another, and Noonan gets more and more burned. And the boys start to scotch a little, themselves. And finally Noonan says: "If you (Please turn to page 57)

The dame looked like she had been crying, Sload said.



"Caught red-handed," says the patrolman. "I seen him running, with a mask on—"

now and then he'd give you a quick smile. His teeth were very white and even. He wore this funny checkered cap, like I say, and a cravenette, usually open, and loosely belted.

ONE story was that he'd lammed out of Denver with some high-up society woman, and that Tover wasn't his real name, at all. Another was that she was a prominent actress who'd given up her career to follow him. Maybe Sload started it. He claimed he saw Tover with a swell auburn-hair dame coming out of the old Union restaurant one night.



Dick Powell, of the "Hollywood Hotel" program.

Hosts at

Who's new on the air

Buck, president of the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers. Each girl drew a number in the presence of one official before the final competition, and the contestants were known to the judges only as numbers. Each girl sang three songs, and read a scene from "Show Girl," by J. P. McEvoy, author of the "Hollywood Hotel" scripts.

The winner of all this, Rowene Williams, is twenty-five years old, and has been on the air five years in Minneapolis and St. Paul. For the last three years she has appeared with the Minneapolis Grand Opera Company. But she sang popular songs for the first time when she went to Chicago four months ago, and was so successful that she was held over for three months at the Chicago Theater.

Louella Parsons, Hollywood writer of news and gossip of the film colony, will introduce each week a new guest star chosen from those actors and actresses who are appearing in current talking pictures. The first guest star will be Claudette Colbert, who will appear with Warren William on October 5th. Then will follow Ronald Colman on October 12th, Kay Francis on October 19th, and Edmund Lowe on October 26th.

The return of many air favorites, and the debut of several productions and personalities new to radio have marked the beginning of an unusually lively broad-

FOR years and years and years, the networks have been swamped with letters from girls describing themselves as potential stars ("Is Kate Smith good? You should hear me!") and begging for an audition to prove it. Although it was impossible to take all these girls seriously, there lurked in every radio executive's breast a hopeless curiosity about the extent of the average applicant's talent.

For the reason that sensational new voices are to be desired, and that radio producers are forced time and time again to rely on "name" professionals, the girls who wrote the eager letters were subject to continual conjecture in the program departments. However, when the sponsors of "Hollywood Hotel" determined to discover a new voice for their show this fall, by conducting a nation-wide free-for-all audition, the veil of mystery was lifted at last.

Contesting girls stepped up to the microphone in the Columbia studios, and the radio program men sat and listened. Oh, how they listened! There were countless sweet little voices that must have sounded very nice indeed to the family of a Sunday evening as they sat around the piano while Nellie sang. There were choir-singers attempting torch songs—with the torch flickering weakly. There were innumerable bars of "L'Amour, Toujours L'Amour." There was tonsillitis.

And then, there was Rowene Williams.

Miss Williams, Minneapolis soprano and former opera-singer, was the lucky gal finally chosen as the outstanding entrant among the twenty thousand young women who were given auditions for this program. As the winner, she is broadcasting every Friday on the coast-to-coast network from Hollywood, together with Dick Powell, film star, Ted Fieritz's orchestra, William O'Neal, Louella Parsons and El Brendel in the "Hollywood Hotel" program sponsored by the Campbell Soup Company on a WABC-Columbia network from 9:30 to 10:30 (E.S.T.).

The preliminary auditions were held by eighty-six Columbia stations in the United States and in Canada. The winners in these eighty-six auditions then competed in twelve regional auditions, and the winner in each regional zone was brought to New York for the final test on August 16. The twelve finalists were guests of the Columbia Broadcasting System for four days of entertainment and sightseeing.

Fay Bainter, Peggy Wood, and Frederick Worlock, all well known on the stage, were among the judges, as was also Gene



John McCormack



Irene Wicker



Lewis Lawes

casting season. Now that summer static is off the air, commercial sponsors are on again. During vacation days many of us were reduced to listening to stock-reports (and a cheerful little entertainment *that* proved to be!) or, if we had a short-wave set, to police signals. After two months there is something rather wearing, even to the most ardent short-wave enthusiast, in hearing: "Car 15; go to the corner of Elm and Maple streets; family trouble. Car 15; go to the corner of Elm and Maple streets; family trouble." Even the repeated order for Car 21 to go to 452 Sinclair Street, boy lighting bonfire in middle of street, failed to bring color, romance and drama into our lives about the second week in August.

But now we're back with the good old familiar comedians, orchestras, singers:

So far this fall, the National Broadcasting Company has quite an imposing list of programs. The American Bosch Radio Explorers Club started August 10th on an NBC-WJZ coast-to-coast network with a series of regular Sunday broadcasts. A few days

Listen Inn

by Drew Kent

later the makers of Enna Jettick shoes presented the first of a series of quarter-hours featuring Dennis King and Louis Katzman's orchestra, and on August 27th, the Billy Batchelor shows put on by the Wheatena Corporation (with Raymond Knight) returned to the air. Tony Wons has been doing his bit to make the world full of sweetness and light via his WEAF "House by the Side of the Road," which is presented by S. C. Johnson and Son, Inc.

Those listeners who can't do without their Winchell gossip and tattle-telling are able to find him again by tuning in on WJZ any Sunday at 9:30. The Andrew Jergens Company sponsors this program, which is re-broadcast for Pacific Coast listeners at midnight. Dale Carnegie is back too, at NBC, with his Sunday talks about famous personages under the banner of the Malted Cereals Company. Another talk series which has a wide listener-appeal is the Simmons Company's Tuesday evening half-hours, in which Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt discusses current events.

The Mohawk Treasure Chest, the Union Central Life's "Roses and Drums," the "Maybelline Musical Romance" and the Pontiac Motor program returned to the air in September. Pepsodent is still sponsoring Amos 'n' Andy (who says there is no stability in modern life!) Warden Lawes of Sing Sing has returned to a WJZ network each



Rowene Williams, winner of the contest.



Eve Sully

Bing Crosby



Gertrude Niesen

The Ward Baking Company has inaugurated a new series presenting Buddy Rogers and his Green Stripe Orchestra, Jennie Lang, and the Three Rascals. (Gosh, I wish they'd change that name—it's too much for even a radio editor!) Buck Rogers is sponsored by Cocomalt; "The Voice of Experience" and Edwin C. Hill by Wasey Products; and Whispering Jack Smith and Arnold Johnson's orchestra are Giving Their All for Ionized Yeast. The football program given by Shell Eastern Petroleum is being presented at six-thirty Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. That young Crosby man (first name "Bing" in case you've been in Little America for the past three years and are not up on modern trends) is going to sing—and, well, sing, for the John H. Woodbury Co.

"The Adventures of Gracie" is the title of the new series featuring Burns and Allen presented by the General Cigar Company on Wednesday evenings at nine-thirty. Those listeners who often find Sunday broadcasting rather dull will be glad to know that Richard Himber and his Studebaker Champions can be heard on that evening. The new fall series of the Ex-Lax Company features Block and Sully, Gertrude Niesen and Lud Gluskin and his Continental Orchestra. "Lazy Dan, the Minstrel Man" (Old English Floor Wax), "The Shadow" (Blue Coal), and "Easy Aces" (Wyeth Chemical Co.) have started in the last few days on their winter career of radio entertainment. And "The March of Time" (with Time, Inc., the original sponsors back on the job) makes its initial appearance October 5th.

And you can't say we haven't told you who sponsors the programs!

Roxy is back on the air. After several months' absence from the microphone, one of radio's pioneer showmen has come back to his fans, and this time under commercial sponsorship (Fletcher's Castoria). If that isn't news, the fact that Roxy is broadcasting over a Columbia Broadcasting System network should be. He wore an NBC tie and hat-band for years. And Roxy not only has a sponsor and a new network—he is building up a new gang. He is going in, also, for a technique reminiscent of his elaborate stage presentations, but new to the microphone, in his "ear pictures," in which he mixes music, dialogue and sound effects to create a distinct picture in the listener's mind. In spite of his large cast—including a concert orchestra, a mixed chorus, quartet, actors, and numerous guest stars, the impresario is striking a note of informality and a relaxed pace typical of the days twelve years ago, when he first started his radio career.

Wednesday under the sponsorship of the William R. Warner Company. And Spratt's Patent, Ltd., has brought Albert Payson Terhune's dog stories back on the chain. Woodbury's NBC show is "Dangerous Paradise," with Elsie Hitz and Nick Dawson. More recent additions to the NBC broadcasts are the Armo Iron Master (American Rolling Mill Company) with a fifty-piece band and guest artists; the Ivory Stamp Club with Tim Healy (Proctor & Gamble); the "Typical American Boy" dramatic series, sponsored by Beech-Nut; a half-hour musical show produced by Smith Brothers; and—yes, Graham!—Ed Wynn in the Texas Company program.

Among the series which are being resumed at Columbia are Edwin C. Hill's "The Human Side of the News," Buck Rogers, "The Voice of Experience," "Easy Aces," "The March of Time," and "The Shadow." Bing Crosby, Burns and Allen, Gertrude Niesen, Whispering Jack Smith, Jennie Lang, Buddy Rogers, Roxy, Dick Powell, William O'Neal and Ted Fiorito are among the familiar entertainers who appear as central figures in new productions.

Dame, which likes 'em fast, has a young giant, Don Elser, in its backfield. Soutber Cal, which likes 'em big, is doing very well with little Cotton Warhouser.

The big idea behind every play, regardless of system, is so to maneuver that the defense will be fooled into leaving the point to be attacked without adequate protection. That, of course, is sound military science. Whenever you see a big hole opened, you can be sure of three things: the quarterback has called a smart play; the defense has been fooled; and the key men in the offensive blocking have done a fine job. So, when you see young Jones rush through into a clear field for a sixty-yard run, pause and give a thought to the brains, brawn and skill of his mates.

Paste this in your memory about the two main systems: Notre Dame is always aiming for the perfect play, shooting at the goal-line—which explains why it produces so many long or "climax" runs. The Warner system is more adapted to shorter, more consistent gains. Does this make plain to you just why Pop Warner, so aptly named the Old Fox, has been campaigning for years to make first downs a factor in accumulating points? Particularly because, while adept at collecting first downs in mid-field, the Warner system tends to pile up on itself at the goal-line. With so much of the offensive motion being sideways, the defense, with less territory to protect, charges through and is more apt to stop plays before they get started.

Here it is necessary to take some of the glory away from defensive teams for those heroic goal-line stands. Out in the open field the defense has so much territory to defend that its man-power must be scattered; but observe, as a team is hacked toward its own goal, how its defensive area becomes more narrow, how the backs creep closer to the line until, at the time of those goal-line stands, there is almost a double wall of defense. Those last ten yards furnish the test of offensive football. While you are cheering the under-dog for his gallant stand, give some thought to the task of the upper-dog. And whenever the scoring play seems easy, be sure the quarterback has outsmarted the defense.

The most interesting part of football, to the student, occurs *before the play begins*. On the field the quarterback is in sole command, completely responsible. He is the boss. Everything about him, his personality, his bearing, his voice, should announce that. Watch him. Does he look cocky? Get your glasses on his face. Is he sneering at the enemy, laughing at them, giving them the impression he thinks they are a bunch of morons who got on the field by mistake? If he's a born quarterback, he's getting that feeling across in one method or another.

It is too bad—or perhaps just as well—that the crowd cannot hear some of the talk that goes down in that narrow little theater of scrimmage, see some of the things that are done. There is a constant flow of badinage back and forth across the line, most of it good-natured, much of it funny, some profane. There's more than a little rough stuff, now and then a disguised left hook which is repaid in due time. It's a man's game, and it's played that way. The officials, military police in this gridiron warfare, have all been players. They understand, enjoy and overlook, as intelligent law-officers always do, unless somebody goes too far. It's all part of the attempt to try to get the other fellow's goat.

The quarterback should be, and usually is, a leader in this business. If he can distract or harass an opponent, he will have that much better chance of sending a successful play over him. If a defensive tackle has his mind on slugging the man on the other side of the line, he is easy prey for a smart quarterback. It's a battle of wits as well of brawn. If you're a lip-reader get a strong pair of glasses, and you'll have some fun out of a football game you never had before.

The quarterback's job is to use the play which will have the most chance of succeeding at the moment. He has at his command, in addition to ten other men, such instruments as the huddle, the shift, reverses and spinners, all instruments of deception. He observes the enemy, studies their personnel, their defensive positions, their reactions to plays already called. He has at his command about forty plays, but he seldom uses more than ten in each game. Only about sixty plays can be squeezed into the sixty minutes of actual play. The smart quarterback, instructed by the wise coach, keeps on using his strongest plays, mixing them up, shooting them at the best spots, *setting the stage* for the biggest ground-gainers.

STUDY the plays as the quarterback calls them. See if you can get his strategy. It is not easy, because you cannot have his sources of information—and for that same reason, be slow to

scourge him. He probably knows more football than you do and if he's radically wrong, the coach will get him out of there. And never forget that he's just a kid of somewhere around twenty. If he loses his head and you want to blame him, look around, and you'll see eighty thousand grown-up candidates for padded cells.

The purpose of the huddle, it is generally understood, is to make sure that every player gets the signal, and to keep the other team from guessing it. There is, however, little if any signal-stealing in football. Things move too fast for that, and it isn't at all practical. The huddle is also an instrument for providing a rest period and for talking things over. This last point is sometimes a handicap. The quarterback receives information from his mates at all times, but should not receive suggestions. The huddle often develops arguments which only confuse the quarterback.

Notice that Notre-Dame-coached teams seldom use the huddle. They are supposed to be smart enough to get the signals; the quarterback is a dictator—and his voice, always distinctive and inspiring, is that driving, marching music for the shift. Listen to it at the next opportunity. "Seventy-four—fifty-six—thirty-eight! Hike. One—two—three—"

The Hike is a convenient word which marks the command for the shift to begin. The play may start on any of the succeeding numbers.

The human voice of command is designed to have the military effect. Listen to the quarterback's voice. Would it send you into battle with more fire, more confidence, more rhythm? That is the object.

At Princeton, Fritz Crisler has effected a compromise between the two ideas: Observe how his quarterback stays out of the huddle and out of arguments; instead, you will find Kadlic siding up the defensive formation of the enemy, their personnel. Then he darts into the huddle just long enough to give the signal, and the Tiger shift begins.

Count with them: First the center, Captain Kalbaugh, comes out and goes over the hall; then the line, then the backs. Keep counting on different plays. Observe how they march into position; how they change the number of steps.

The purpose of all shifts is to throw the enemy off balance. When the offensive team shifts, observe how the defense shifts to meet it. Count with every shifting team, and you'll soon begin to see into their pattern. Most shifts start from the huddle. The "squirrel-cage" of Howard Jones at Southern Cal, and Lou Little's "muddle-huddle" at Columbia, are not mere freaks of showmanship. All that meandering around is intended to confuse the defense, get it off balance—and provide the opportunity to strike.

Shifting teams are colorful. Try to get their secrets.

After the quarterback has used his head, after the badinage is

Next Month

Who Were They,

those five hundred white ties and velvet frocks dancing on the night of February 8th, on the eve of the great Harrow Filibuster, in the Massachusetts Avenue mansion of Mrs. Joan Glenarm? They were New Dealers, Old Dealers and Radical Professors, Wall Street, Rue de la Paix and Main Street, soft-spoken sirens and hard-boiled virgins, black-haired South American diplomats and white-haired, fat-bellied Tammany politicians, visiting Governors and Dupont Circle dowagers, kept men and kept women. . . They were heroes and heroines of—

"A Woman of Washington"

A complete book-length novel
(50,000 words)

by

Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr.
who wrote "A Farewell to Fifth Avenue"

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The guests are seated . . . the stage is set . . . the curtain is up . . . enter Campbell's Tomato Soup! The eye is greeted with a gay dash of enlivening color. The taste is quickened with the instant tong of bright and exhilarating flavor. Sparkle . . . animation . . . the barriers down . . . the conversation flowing. Can the soup really play such an important role in the party's success? Well, just serve Campbell's Tomato Soup. And then you will quickly enough have your answer!

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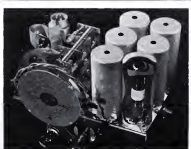
RCA VICTOR INTRODUCES THE "MAGIC BRAIN"

An amazing new built-in feature of its all-wave sets—bringing you perfected world-wide reception and new Higher Fidelity Tone!

Here's the final great step in RCA Victor all-wave radio—the "Magic Brain"! Years in the making, it's out at last—such a perfection of tone miracle as you have never even dreamed of! Broadcasts—even from the far ends of the earth—take on a human note, a lifelike note, through the magic of this device.

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Matching the marvelous achievement of the "Magic Brain" is the rare charm of these new cabinets. Models by a great American designer—painstakingly built by master-craftsmen in the finest cabinet factory in America. Cabinets whose beauty matches the amazing perfection of RCA Victor's newest and greatest sensation—the "Magic Brain". See them—*hear* them!

Standard Broadcast Radios \$18.75 to \$99.50 . . . Globe Trotters \$9.95 to \$75 . . . "Magic Brain" Globe Trotters \$69.95 to \$125 . . . Duo Radio Photograph Combination \$39.95 to \$175 . . . Auto Radios \$39.95 to \$59.95 . . . Air Cell Battery Radios \$30.65 to \$78.95. All RCA Victor Radios energized with RCA Micro Sensitive Radio Tubes. All prices F. O. C. Camden, N. J., subject to change without notice.

RCA VICTOR *Globe Trotter* RADIO

RCA VICTOR COMPANY, ONE UNIT OF RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA...THE WORLD'S LARGEST RADIO ORGANIZATION. OTHER UNITS: NATIONAL BROADCASTING CO. . . R. C. A. COMMUNICATIONS, INC. . . RCA RADIOTRON CO. . . RADIOMARINE CORPORATION OF AMERICA

over, after the huddle, shift, and hidden-ball stuff have been completed, the ball is passed, and we reach the real secret of offensive football, which is *blocking*. No back ever lived who could get far against eleven men. The extent of his success depends upon the quality of the help he gets. That's why the all-American stuff is unfair. Great blockers make good backs sensational. Poor blocking makes great backs merely good. The back, in most cases, is merely a chip on the waves.

Blocking isn't haphazard—or it shouldn't be. Each man has a job to do on each play. A hole must be opened. The idea is simple enough. If you and I are linemen preceding Jones, and there are two men before us trying to stop him, I try to move one man to the *left*, and you try to move the other man to the *right*. If we have done our job well, we have made a hole for him to crash through.

If by use of badinage, the huddle, shift, reverse or spinner, one of those two men has been enticed away, the job will be much easier. Furthermore, if by clever calling of the preceding plays the quarterback has maneuvered out of position the man who figured to give us the most trouble, whether my man or yours, then the play becomes simple. We two linemen then get credit for a great block, and Jones drives a spike in his all-American; but little thought is given to the coaching brain that conceived and drilled the rest of the team into the deception, or to the wise quarterback who called the right play at the right moment. A great quarterback makes everybody's work easier.

In general, an attempt is always made to get as many men as possible ahead of the runner without weakening the rear. The other three backs are usually ahead of the man who carries the ball; but you've often seen great waves of interference, particularly on plays off-tackle or around the ends. Where do those extra men come from? This brings up the position which is probably least understood in modern football: Those men are guards; they pull out of the line and get into the interference. They have become, in almost all cases, blocking half-backs. That's why the guard of today is of smaller stature than of old. He must be fast—and smart. If you want to see something which will surprise you, watch the guards on every offensive play.

The tackles are the big men these days, because upon them rests the brunt of the defense. Great tackles are the bulwarks

of the line—and perhaps you did not know that the left tackle is usually the better man, because most plays come his way. It is an odd fact that players seem to run better to their right. This explains why the left halfback is usually the best runner, and the right halfback is so often the blocker.

The center should be big but not cumbersome. The trend is, if we may become a bit "buggy" toward the six-man line, which means that the center shares with the fullback the job of backing the line and protecting against passes. On offense, if a center does make a bad pass occasionally, remember all the good ones.

THERE'S another thing about line play. In publicity regarding games, or in conversation, we frequently hear of the anticipated meeting between, for instance, two great guards of opposing teams. The general impression is that guards play against guards, tackles against tackles, ends against ends. This is not true. Observe how the offensive line is shoulder to shoulder, closely bunched, and how the defensive line is spread wide. This alignment places, in most cases, offensive tackles against defensive guards, offensive ends against defensive tackles, and the nearest offensive back against the defensive end. The offensive guards have little opposition directly before them.

Are you inclined to wolf the quarterback who calls a pass on first down, even in his own territory—because it violates the general rules of strategy as you know them? Before you do so, be sure you have looked over the position of the defense. It may have been that at that particular moment a pass play had a good chance to succeed, and the quarter should always call the play which has the best chance to succeed, unless the element of risk is too great.

What do you watch on a pass play? The ball, probably. You note, perhaps, that one, occasionally two, men go back to protect the passer; when he finally heaves the ball, you follow it and see somebody leap for it, catch it or knock it down. But how did that man get down there in position to catch it? How did he fool the defense, if he did?

Try watching these things about passing: six men are eligible to catch a pass—the four backs, and the two men on the end of the line, whether or not these two happen to be ends. Since one man must pass, there remain five eligible. If one

or two remain to block, four or three go down. The defense must keep all of them under cover. Forget the passer on the next pass play, and watch how those men go down. How they fake, hesitate, decoy, wind a devious way to their objective. Then, when the ball comes, see if it is *leading* the receiver so that he can pluck it from the air without losing his stride. If a defensive man is racing with him in an attempt to intercept, see if the ball comes on the *opposite* side, where the defensive man cannot get at it. If it does, you have watched a great pass.

We have dealt chiefly with offense, because the burden is on the offense. There is science to defensive football, but it is chiefly a rebuttal, an answer to each question asked by the offense. Defense is less mysterious and more obvious. The defensive team meets each new move as best it can. The rest is imbedded in the second great fundamental of the gridiron: tackling.

There are three essentials to defense matching the three qualities of offense. The great defense will not be fooled by deception; it matches speed with speed to reach the threatened spot, and once there, it matches power with power in a double manner. It refuses to be blocked, and it makes its tackles stick.

Could you, right now, identify the various officials? Probably not. Try it: the referee follows the offensive team; the umpire trails the defensive team; the field judge is the fellow far back of the defense. Did you know he was also the timekeeper? That's why you watch him in the closing seconds of a tight game. He's the one man on the field entitled to carry a gun.

Now one word in closing the subject: Perhaps you don't get to many football games but can listen on the radio. If you know football, you have probably cursed Graham McNamee and his pals for their sometimes humorous mistakes. Don't be too hard on the radio announcers. Many of them have been singers. They have not had newspaper training, so you shouldn't judge them by newspaper standards. Few of them have played football.

Then why are they on the job?

Because they have the two qualities their bosses place more value on than complete accuracy or knowledge: They have radio voices and they have enthusiasm. Remember that radio's chief function is to entertain. The great majority want a show. And that's what they get.

THIS WOMAN AND THIS MAN

(Continued from page 51)

So she would sit motionless as she could, her hands upturned on her lap, her eyes reflecting the fire; and he, beside his cupped hand, could watch the fluent drama of her face. It had thinned, and it was shadowed. It made his heart ache.

At last, really, she spoke to him. "I am like Benjamin Krane," she said, her lips delicate and slow to confession. "That is why I must forgive him, so's I can forgive my own self."

Pony laid down his book to show that he was listening, but still kept up his propping elbow and his hand. Nor did he speak. He knew it was a hope for healing, a salvation, that her wound should bleed.

"I was raised up," she said, "to think of killing. My father never did the killing, never got his man; so that kept him brooding, and the will for death lived with us always. Oliver would not understand that. He would never. It would be too hard. Killing is not his business, nor his nature. He would think a girl a savage, to be brought up to kill."

"I figure that he would," said Pony, as softly as the fire spoke to his logs.

"He would not have met up with many such in his life. He was raised by his mother, who was a gentlewoman, in what they call 'watering-places'—and with such like folks as Sue and Kay and Mr. Far-

rant in New York City. For such as them, life has not been so sort of serious—with loving, killing, murder and such like."

"Will he,"—Pony's voice had the note of innocence,—"will he be seeing those people in New York?"

"I figure likely."

"When will he be back, Virginia?"

"As soon as the law about money will allow."

"The law is a slow worker. It may keep him dangling for a long time. It's worse than easy gold."

Virginia sighed, and rested her chin down upon her linked hands.

"I have had to think," she said. Her poor eyes were huge with thinking. "And that what I was telling you is the truth of all my thoughts."

Then she repeated with an exquisite purity and humbleness of tone: "I forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us." I used to think that saying made a bargainer of God—that He was not free-hearted, but always asking for a balance to His account. But it is not like that. He cannot, likely, help Himself. When God forgives you, it's just because you can forgive yourself. For that maybe is a god that is inside you. First off, you must see that your trespass is the same as that trespass that was against you. I was the same as Ben. I wanted out of my way what was a trouble and a danger to me, and to my love. That want is—murder, Pony."

"No, Jill."

"Yes. Ben was a savage. And I was a savage too. It is too simple to act that way—like what you feel, not thinking. In hating, it is too simple; and in loving it is too simple. You have to grow up from a root and a trunk, to have them little pretty twigs and the ten thousand leaves against the sky. So's you get sun and rain—not just the flavor of the earth. I have learned that. I pinned the trespass that was in my nature onto Ben, for his likeness to me; and when I let him go across that rock, it was my own sin going—my sin that I had fastened to him—going down to death. And I was not honest then with my own murdering mind, for I said, aloud, 'It will be God's act, not mine,' which was the talk of a coward. I should have held my tongue, rather. That was a lie to God, a warning that was not a warning, that I knew could not be a warning to Ben. You see, I feared God, so I lied to Him. 'Forgive us our trespasses.'"

"And you can't love your neighbor, Pony, better than you love yourself. For you are your neighbor; you pin upon him your own hidden faults and misdoings, to be angry with them openly—like the old notion of a 'scapegoat' my father read out to me once. But when you have taken back your sins and ugly ways and said, 'These are my own,' and cried and humbly confessed yourself to be your neighbor—then you begin again to love your own soul; and so it is that you can love your neighbor like yourself—for he is yourself in kind and nature."

THIS was thought that Oliver would understand. To Pony it was mystic nonsense, childishness. In Pony's heart, narrow and deep, his anger coiled and moved and prepared itself for venom. When the moment of defenselessness, of looking aside, should come upon his prey, there was a deadly power in that coiling hate of Krane's. He longed to spit poison upon Oliver's letters, which he carried to Virgilia, and which she read with a quick ebb and flow of color in her face.

She herself wrote very rarely and very painfully. It would have been better for her, thought Pony, if she did not write at all. For inexpressive as she might be in ignorant speech, she had always, in the beauty of her mobile lips, her bell voice and shining eyes, an undefeatable eloquence; whereas with her pen she was mere clumsiness, entirely unable to put down even

a one-dimensional picture of her mind. So he mailed those ignorant letters with an ache of pity and a glow of gratitude. For they would help to do his work.

BEFORE Christmas the dark witch-weather had blown and stormed itself out; and now, blanketed in deep snow, the log houses glowed with warmth and pleasantness, while all day, from ruby dawn to turquoise evening, the sun glittered in a sky iris as June's. Feather-flakes lay two inches deep on the sparkle of the crust, rainbow feathers, that would fly in separate delicacy before a breath or at a tossing touch. So beautiful it was—snow-peaks, holy blue shadows, icicles that were the gates of heaven, long diamond-fields, that it seemed the landscape of a star, fit for the habitation only of the Shining Ones.

Through this shining, Virgilia went every day to her red rock—to face Ghost Robber's promise. She was more humble and more human now. . . . Not for longing to possess the whole wild world did her poor eyes go wet. There was one creature she would possess, one only; and longing for him, the feel, the touch, the sight, the warmth and nearness of him, crushed her heart slowly.

Pony was anxious. She should not be climbing that high rock. It was glazed with ice, precipitous and dangerous. One afternoon when she was late returning, he followed her, risking her anger, for he knew she would prefer her solitude.

He followed her long broken ski-tracks, even and rhythmic to the eye, and climbed up to the top of her post, and saw the Tetons glorious with setting sun. But Virgilia had gone; he was more anxious about her than ever, and came down so hastily that what he had feared for her happened to himself. He slipped, was flung over, twisted his leg and lay in the icy shadow doubled up, gasping for pain.

Pony knew well enough the end for any living creature that lay still in that shadow after the sun was gone. He called. There was no answer but the echo that had mocked at Oliver's farewell. Pony must, therefore, get on, no matter what the pain, toward help. He managed to free himself from the ski bindings, and to crawl forward, mittened hands and right knee against the hard snow-crust, dragging his injured left leg in its agony. At intervals surrendering to pain, he stopped and called: "Virgilia. . . Virgilia—help!" So he got himself down from the red rock through the fir, where he kept floundering into pitfalls of soft snow, to the lower open country just above the swamps; and there at last he got an answer. Virgilia had heard him and was coming back. Her skis sang rescue; he could hear how her swift pole bit into the crust. He crouched against the bank, thrashing his arms about his body to keep his blood alive.

As she came round a patch of willows that had by some vagary of wind or water escaped the drift, a big bull moose surged up, black as a lump of lava rock, out of the swamp. He did not hesitate more than one breathless instant, but banging down his prehistoric head, struck at the snow and charged the man. Pony, shouting, struggled up, trying to flounder his wounded body to the haven of the nearest tree. Virgilia stopped. Even in the red

blindness of his terror, he could see her shake like a young tree struck by a wind. That was the instinct for flight, for preservation—fought back by the strong and generous instinct to save another. She whipped off her sheepskin jacket, flapped it before her at the full length of her arms, and came at the big beast, top speed, screaming like a maniac.

The moose was shocked. He flung up his head, wheeled, and with his great shouldering tread made off again down into the willow swamps which did not harbor such strange and horrible folk.

Jill got into her coat and came, laughing. "That was sort of funny, wasn't it? Sam Woodering told my father about that trick one day up in the Park. . . . Pony—you're hurt!"

"Hadin't been for you—I'd be dead." She put her arms about him, and they made their slow way back.

On the settle in her living-room she put a compress on his swollen ankle. He said: "We are quits now, Virgilia Diccon. You have saved a Krane's life."

She glowed; her eyes shone; beauty of absorption was in her face. She looked up from where she was kneeling, and her eyes filled. "I'm happier," she said. "That's better, Griff, saving a life, than figuring how to take it."

"It's a heap better for me that I was worth your risking your own life for. It would be sort of horrible to be tramped down into the snow by those big hundred-weight hoofs."

"Don't, Pony! I never did see a black thing look so big, that was alive. I kept remembering how Josh Curtin died."

A FEW days after Christmas, Tom Toggan brought a package for Virgilia.

Oliver, in a male bewilderment and with his imagination all estranged, had sent her a garnet velvet robe, fur-trimmed, a pair of silver sandals, and a silver ornament of leaves. Virgilia, who had waited to open the parcel until she was alone, sat on the bearskin rug before her fire and held these offerings. Her hands first touched them, then were still. She got up gravely, went into her bedroom, stripped off the heavy man's clothing of Wyoming winter, and got into her trailing robe. She put on silk stockings and the sandals. The ornament was meant to lie flat at her throat, but she set it on her bright head like a wreath. She stood before the long clear mirror of Oliver's introduction. Surely that was the gravest contemplation ever made by star-eyes bent upon their own loveliness. There she stood, snow-white, rose-red, young, ardent, shining, nobly-eked—there in her mirror, forsaken, quite alone.

She moved out into her sitting-room, showed herself to the evening star. Her unaccustomed heels made her walk slowly and stand tall. She began to laugh, thinking: "I must look pretty funny, all dressed up like this—alone." She set a balancing hand against the log wall, and looked down at her dress. Her heart moved. She said aloud: "I would rather have had—you, Oliver." Suddenly, as though he had come into the room and spoken to her, she understood the secret meaning of Pony's silence and half-speech. "Your man will not be coming back. He won't be coming back." Over and over—in cruel veiled sentences.

3 Discerning Women

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Left—"I wanted the best tooth paste
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Miss Elizabeth Brown is stylist and designer of decorative pottery for one of the world's largest potteries. She is a graduate of West Virginia University and of New York School of Fine and Applied Arts. She also studied in London, Paris, and Italy.

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Right—"I like the idea of a
tooth paste by the makers
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very well pleased."

Miss Marjorie Bushman is assistant in a doctor's office, a kind of work which requires intelligence, energy and plenty of tact. She likes her occupation because, as she says, "you're always learning something new."

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Tooth Paste gets my teeth
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It was close to supper-time. Now she heard Pony coming. It was too late to hide her silly magnificence. She went royally across the room to the door and threw it wide, standing there in tropic color to face the fading light, while Pony came, startled, toward her between two high walls of snow. There was an ice column to the right and left of her. One would have said, a fairy queen locked into a crystal casket. He stopped to stare up.

"These are a Christmas gift from Oliver," she said. "Tom brought them."

"Go into the house, Jill. You'll freeze. The mercury's forty below."

"I'm warm."

"That won't keep you from frostbite. I've got some books here—like the ones you figured it might be fun and good practice for us to read aloud." He doctored at the porch like a gondolier, stepped up out of his ski shoes, stuck his pole into the drift and came in, she following. He had, she now saw, a queer brick color in his face.

"I've been down for the mail myself. Tom brought the parcels. . . . But I have a letter for you. It was mailed from New York on Christmas Eve."

"From him?"

"Yes. It's from him."

Pony took off his fur glove, drew out the envelope and gave it to her. The color went out of his face.

She walked over to the window and read her letter under the light of Ghost Robber Mountain's star. When she turned back, Pony was close to her, looking from under the tumbling lock. He said softly: "He won't be coming back."

"Why do you say that to me now?"

"Because of what I see in your face." It was a lie. He had been able to open and to read and to reclose that letter. The long age of his suspense, the long resentment of Glenn's "treachery," and the long hunger of his love had tampered with the fingers of that artificial aristocratic code. Pony knew that Virgilia was indeed forsaken.

She stood before him, her face quite still, and he wished to take her into his arms.

"I love you," he said. "I would never leave you—hurt you." He watched her face as if it were that of a patient under the danger of his own surgical knife. "That man is not for you. You know what has happened, don't you, Jill? It is—another woman."

Pain that was strange and sharp as acid took possession of her.

"No. He will be back." She tore up his letter, dropped the bits into the fire. "He doesn't know his own heart, the way I know it." She waited, and grew still above her pain. "I am not afraid, you see. I know he will be back."

Pony softly laughed.

Fire in ice, her eyes fell on him.

"Go out from here! You have misnamed him. Never come back into his house no more."

Pony's nicker stopped. He looked up at her. After a long hard silence, he took his cap and went away.

VIRGILIA'S face changed from its pure stillness, and she went down on the floor, as Oliver once had thrown her down and tied her, body, mind and heart, with

his deft rope. Dressed in his foolish velvet, she lay there, her bright head against cold boards, and moved the russet head a little to and fro, making no sound, hurting her forehead. But presently she began to say over and over: "He will come back. He loves me. He loves me. He will come back." After a while of this she told the cold earth beneath the cold boards: "There cannot be any other woman, because he is my man."

That night, very late, dressed in her faded scarlet flannel gown, her russet hair in two meek braids, she wrote by fire- and candle-light a message to Ben Krane's son Griffith. She set no name upon it, and it began abruptly.

You must not never come back. You have spoiled what we had. I was happy to be with you. Now you have hurt me too much. It was not faithful to me and my true heart, the terrible things you have said. I cannot endure to see your face. I am sorry this is the truth, but it cannot be changed. I am not one to change. Don't write. Don't come. I could not bear it. It would be my death, only to hear your voice, that had such words for me when I was fighting alone to keep my happiness. —Virgilia.

For some reason the writing of this letter gave her a frozen peace, so that she slept.

She sent it over to Pony's cabin by Tom Toggins. She made no attempt to write to Oliver. "He will be coming back." She even said this aloud in a full ringing voice to Tom, who thought her radiant with confident bridal joy.

"Oliver will be coming back any day now, Tom. I had a letter from him."

THIS letter that Pony had opened and read and brought to her, resealed, was the one Oliver had written just before he went, on Christmas Eve, to win Kay back from Lewis Farrant to himself.

By the time Oliver on Christmas Eve found himself again in Kay Winter's hallway, the tea-party had changed to a cocktail-party, and Lewis Farrant was by no means her only guest. Taking off his overcoat and scarf, Oliver was arrested by Lewis Farrant's voice:

"Virgilia Glenn?" he was asking.

"Yes—quick, Lew, before Kay comes back!"

"Well—Virgilia Glenn—Jill, she's called out there, is one of these big, raw-boned Western wenches—big-eyed, cud-chewing sort of. . . . I think Oliver must have been caught in the ancient trap of the farmer's daughter. She sent a hurry-call last spring, 'Wolf! Wolf!' Remember how quickly he got away? Had promised her rescue if she asked for it. That'd be like Oliver. Anyway, he made an honest woman of her, and found out the trick too late. Oh, he's ashamed of her, all right, poor chap! That's obvious. And why not? She murders the king's English, and slaps your face if you treat her like a lady. She's a savage. Anyone who was out there this summer will tell you that he keeps her out of sight."

Oliver pushed back the curtain and stepped into the room. His blood-vessels danced about his brain like warpath Indians, binding together as with a fierce living rope the mind, body and spirit of him. He was one man all over. Virgilia

had come close, was real, immediate, alive, his woman. Down from her red rock, up from her pose of penitent. He was, suddenly, her sort, and knew it. The rational consciousness that had been taught its pretty paces, an intellect of only twenty-six years of education, became a straw in the face of his inheritance from the ages of man's anger and man's love. He knew, as by lightning, muted love and the desire to kill. His voice was harsh:

"You were speaking about my wife. I love her. You don't mind talking like a cur before your friends; perhaps you won't mind fighting like one. I'm going to come as close to killing you as I can with my hands. If I had a whip—or a gun—" He choked. His fist shot out. Nothing in all his suppressed and mothered life had given him more gladness than the painful crash of his fist against Lew's jaw.

HE was conscious only of this fierce delight until he heard Kay crying. She must have come in at sound of the fight. She was bending over Lewis, where he lay among her shattered glasses, bleeding on her cream-colored rug. She looked up, a small face of horror. "Oliver," she gasped, "you are a brute—a beast!"

He laughed. It was a loud, robust laughter that needed more space to give it decency.

"I am," he said. "I don't know what you are; but I know that I am a real, honest-to-God human animal, and I know where I belong. I'm on my way to Virgilia Glenn. If Lewis—he's not dead, Kay, one of his eyes is open!—wants his revenge, he can take the first train out to Wyoming."

He found a taxi and gave the name of his hotel. He sat with his head between his bruised hands, clenched hands, that beat at his own temples, for he was remembering his letter to Virgilia. Thank the Lord, he had not posted it. It must have been the muted manhood in his subconscious mind that had made him lay it aside there, when he took the other letters out. . . . "Virgilia—Virgilia, how did I lose you? What went wrong with me? I've been ill; I've been outside—beside myself. Now I'm cured, made one. Lewis did that, mismanaging you. I needed hate—in order to feel love. Darling, I am your man—your man."

... over-tipped the driver and hurled himself into the hotel lift. The elevator-boy said: "You left word at the desk, didn't you, Mr. Glenn, that your colored boy was to be let up into your rooms to get a suit of clothes? He was here while you were out, sir."

"Um. . . . Yes, that's right."

"I saw him go in myself, sir, and waited to see him go." Gee Carpenter—that the right name, sir?

Oliver stepped off, went to his door and let himself in. He hurried to the desk. The two letters he had laid aside for future mailing were gone, but there stood a conspicuous scrawl from Gee.

Thank you for the note, Mister Glenn. It certainly will do fine. I mailed your 2 letters. They was all stamped and I recede how you was always forgetting to make them and askt me to. —Gee.

Oliver found that Gee had not dropped the letters into the hotel letter-box, but

Seven Years Apart— Yet Both have Skin equally Young

Beautiful Vanderbilts examined
by Dermatologist for Skin Age
... both get 20-Year-Old Rating



Mrs. Reginald Vanderbilt

famed for her brunette beauty. Her skin was rated by the dermatologist as being practically the same as it was eight years ago. Mrs. Vanderbilt says: "The thorough cleansing Pond's Cold Cream gives keeps my skin clear—fine-pored—seems to wipe away tired lines."

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is an enchanting young blonde with a skin exquisitely fair. The dermatologist declares it to be "a perfect skin of twenty." She says: "I've never had a coarse pore, blackhead, or blemish. I'm sure this is due to Pond's Cold Cream."

YOUNG skin is firm and fine of texture—its color clear—glowing—radiant.

OLD skin is loose, lined, crêpy—its texture is thick and coarse—its color dull—sallow—dark.

These conditions, dermatologists report, are due to loss of tone—impaired vasomotor circulation—failure of glands to produce youth-sustaining oils.

When the two charming Vanderbilts, pictured above, were examined by a dermatologist, their rating was the same. In

actual age, they are seven years apart.

Both of these two noted society beauties are faithful users of Pond's Cold Cream. Could there be more convincing proof that this cream actually keeps the skin young—the young skin at the height of its loveliness?

Cleanse your skin with Pond's Cold Cream every night. Pat it in briskly. It will sink into the pores—float away impurities that linger there. And every morning freshen your skin with this fragrant luxurious cream.

Then your skin will look alluringly

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New quick-melting cream

Pond's now makes a liquefying cream. It melts instantly on the skin. It contains the same specially processed oils for which Pond's Cold Cream is famous.

Send coupon for a 3 days' supply of Pond's Cold Cream, 3 other Pond's effective beauty aids and powder.

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CORRECTS SKIN FAULTS USUAL in the 20's



Roughness



Blackheads and large pores



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Laughter lines



Little defects

FIGHTS OFF AGE SIGNS USUAL after 30



Crêpy skin



Worry lines



Sallowness



Sagging lines



Discolorations

Here are a few DON'TS about laxatives!

Don't take a laxative that is too strong—that shocks the system—that weakens you!

Don't take a laxative that is offered as a cure-all—a treatment for a thousand ills.

Don't take a laxative where you have to keep on increasing the dose to get results!

Take EX-LAX—the laxative that does not form a habit

You take Ex-Lax just when you need a laxative—it won't form a habit. You don't have to keep on increasing the dose to get results. Ex-Lax is effective—but it is mild. Ex-Lax doesn't force—it acts gently yet thoroughly. It works over-night without over-action.

Children like to take Ex-Lax because they love its delicious chocolate taste. Grown-ups, too, prefer to take Ex-Lax because they have found it to be thoroughly effective—without the disagreeable after-effects of harsh, nasty-tasting laxatives.

For 28 years, Ex-Lax has had the confidence of doctors, nurses, druggists and the general public alike, because it is everything a laxative should be.

At any drug store—10c and 25c.

WATCH OUT FOR IMITATIONS!

Ex-Lax has stood the test of time. It has been America's favorite laxative for 28 years. Insist on genuine Ex-Lax—spelled E-X-L-A-X—to make sure of getting Ex-Lax results.



had taken them out to mail. And there had, since then, been a delivery. He was too late. The letter was on its way; it would reach Virgilia! He sent off a telegram, a despairing, useless cry, for a telegram to Moon Creek Cañon in winter was often slower than a letter, depending for transmission upon a wire that might have gone down under the snow, upon the Jackson stage road being open, upon the presence of the Deep Crystal ranger, upon the ability of Tom Toggins to get down to the station. But Oliver sent the message:

IGNORE MY LETTER MAILED DECEMBER TWENTY-FOURTH. WAS SICK, OUT OF MY MIND. NOW IN IT AND WELL AND ON MY WAY TO YOU. FORGIVE ME. NEED YOU, LOVE YOU, WANT YOU.

And, in defiance of transmitters and receivers everywhere, he signed himself, "Your Man."

This he got off, and then called on George Maddox, announced the necessity of an immediate departure, and borrowed some money. George, being confident now of the one-tenth of a loaf, was generous. Oliver promised he would come back if urgently required, and went home to his hotel room to pack. All that night he spent in spasmodic packing, in pacing his tiny quarters, smoking and talking to himself—and to Virgilia. . . .

In the train that drew him westward from the city before a second midnight, Oliver lay wakeful. But this time no small pale ghost whispered its warning, nor did he see a figure on a tall red rock. He seemed to hold his wife there in his arms, weeping. He thought, "Now, being really one, we will have a child." And the rails said, "Com-ing. . . coming. . . coming. Your man. Your man."

PONY was not unduly afflicted by the receipt of Virgilia's message forbidding his return. He put it on his desk under a glass paper-weight, and went on with his writing. A sense of peace and of leisure was upon him, so that he stretched and yawned. Now that Oliver had set his desertion down in writing, P'ony knew that it was a matter only of patience before Virgilia would be won by his devotion. But she must of course have time. Perhaps it would be well for him to go away. It might even be wise to go as far as New York City, and to discover for himself the realities of Oliver's desertion. P'ony decided to do that, and went to the ranger station to wire for reservations.

The ranger was just back from an expedition after an illegal elk-killer.

"A wire came in just when I had to leave," he said. "Couldn't do a thing in the world about it. I was just about to carry it on up to Jill."

He handed his writing of the telephone communication to P'ony Crane, who read:

IGNORE MY LETTER MAILED DEC. TWENTY-FOURTH. WAS SICK, OUT OF MY MIND. NOW IN IT, AND WELL AND ON MY WAY TO YOU. FORGIVE ME. NEED YOU, LOVE YOU, WANT YOU. (SIGNED) YOUR MAN.

P'ony sent out no message to the railway agent. He pocketed his own mail and Virgilia's and went slowly home. Past the Diccon cabin, his head down. He would have to take the telegram to Jill. . . . Oliver was on his way. He had

been sick—was now well, loved her, needed her, wanted her. . . . Damn his soul!

Running up and down his great room, breathing fast, blood on a crushed lip, P'ony stopped at sight of Jill's letter to himself. He put out his hand in a clasp-shape, to tear it up. Its phrases burned him—into stillness, into thought, so that he reread it all. After this, he stood for a long while thinking at top speed, got again into his outdoor clothes, thrust his feet into skis, and started forth. But this time he did not take the trail to John's station. The Jackson mail-stage would be coming across Buffalo Creek. A man on skis, an expert with skis, could make a short-cut on such a still cold afternoon as this—bright crust, firm snow,—to meet that stage before it turned away from Buffalo down toward Moran. P'ony's runners sang like whips.

No one saw him go, except the shifting eyes of animals. He went like a wind, narrowed to human willing, at a shrill speed across the open spaces, whispering for secrecy under the pines. All the little crooked aspen shadows were powerless to trap him or to delay. He came down, coasting, to the beaten snow road, wheeled in a pretty rainbow scud, and saw the horses, plumed with breath, plodding up a steep grade along the hillside.

He stood balking up his arms. When the driver had pulled in, he slid over to the stage.

Oliver Glenn looked at him, startled, and jumped down to the snow.

"You—Pony—here?"

"I've been in Jackson Hole since November. Virgilia sent me—here—to meet you. She got your letter and your wire. She wanted me to intercept you—to give you this."

Oliver took the paper, written in that familiar childish hand, without any opening address and read:

You must not never come back. You have spoiled what we had. I was happy to be with you. Now you have hurt me too much. It was not faithful to me and my true heart, the terrible things you have said. I cannot endure to see your face. I am sorry this is the truth, but it cannot be changed. I am not one to change. Don't write. Don't come. I could not bear it. It would be my death, only to hear your voice, that had such words for me when I was fighting alone to keep my happiness. —Virgilia

He looked up.

"You know what she says here, Pony?"

"Yes."

"Virgilia always means just what she says."

"Yes."

Oliver was breathing fast. Now there was another fear in his face—shock and pain and sharp uncertainty.

"Got a pencil, driver?"

It was produced. Tearing off the corner of a wrapping, Oliver wrote:

"Dearest, I can't blame you. But if it weren't for just one thing you said, I would be coming to you whether you want me or not. You say: 'It would be my death, only to hear your voice.' That scares me, because I know how truthful and exact you are. I am going on to Moran. I'll wait there four days. If, by Saturday, I haven't heard from you or seen you, I'll go East. I'll be waiting for

you there too—until you decide you want to be rid of me for good. Perhaps you have learned to love another man of your own sort. He can't love you as much as I do now, Jill dearest.

Oliver."

"Will you give her that?"

"Surely. I'll be seeing you again?"

Oliver, who had taken off his hat, ran his cold-pinked fingers through wild hair. "Oh, my God, I hope so, Pony. Can't say. It's up to her."

The driver called: "Come along there, will you, Mr. Glenn? We're sure losing time."

"All right. I'm with you."

He sank into his place and sat there with his head down, his hat over his eyes. The driver asked: "Want to get aboard, Doc?"

"No. I'll go the way I came—time enough to make it home before dark. And there's a moon."

THE four days passed. Pony, as when he was a hoy afraid of grizzly bears, watched through his big-game glasses every living thing that moved about the Dicon cabins. If some one should take it into his head to go down the country to Moran—or to come up the country from Moran! The suspense ate at him. No one came or went. No one even went down to get the mail. Virgilia, thought Pony, had lost her taste for letters from the East. Let Oliver only go out in silence, and the fight was won. Letters, if he should write them, could be dealt with. It would be a matter only of patience, of fidelity—a waiting game.

Every afternoon of those interminable afternoons, Pony saw that Jill went out, taking the trail up to her rock. He did not follow her. . . . "Let her have the cold comfort of the Tetons in their shroud! She can't see the road to or from Moran. She's safe there. . . . And today, the fourth day, he will be gone."

Virgilia stood on the red hill above her home and closed her eyes like a woman possessed by a lover. Ghost Mountain stood to face her above the west, three-headed, standing in pale bright silver against its turquoise sky. It promised her a splendor. It embodied a desire. She stood there, her eyes closed, and said a litany with incense-breath:

"I'll come back to you, Virgilia."

"For sure, my darling—beautiful."

"I swear to God I will come back."

"I am telling it to Ghost Mountain."

Virgilia heard the sound of a step on ice behind her, and turned.

Oliver stopped below her, his tormented face quite white and still.

"Don't move," he whispered. "Jill darling—for God's sake—don't step back from me. I won't come any closer. . . . I'll go away. . . . I didn't hope to find you here. You said to see my face would be your death. . . . It's dangerous—so steep. The ice—for God's sake! . . . I'll go. Only—forgive me—forgive me."

She made that perilous rush of childhood, and had her arms tight round him, as a child in joy. The bell of her lonely calling rang close and clear.

"I've been waiting—waiting. . . . I knowed,"—fiercely—"I knowed that you would come."

THE END

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ONE OF THE

57

HEINZ OVEN BAKED BEANS

Boston Style

STAR OF MIDNIGHT

(Continued from page 31)

right, when she said that the man gratified became less entranced? Was he as emotionally cheap as that? Or did the fault lie in her? Was she to blame that suddenly he looked upon her with a criticism that fifteen minutes ago he would have been prepared to wager his life he could never feel toward her?

That she had ruthlessly jilted him, had meant no diminution of his respect for her. That she had taken three husbands, had not crasped his ideal. Jerry was restless, ever seeking new emotions, when he had known her ten years ago. That the fires of her love should cool, could not affect his regard for her. Jerry was that kind: temperamental, vital, the kind of woman who burned up in her own flames. That was why he had loved her.

But yesterday her husband had not been frank with him. He had been interested in Mary Smith, and had hidden that interest. And this visit of Jerry's became too pat. He couldn't believe that it was not a planned thing. To do something on the spur of the moment, was like the Jerry he had known and loved; but somehow this visit did not ring true. She showed the same furtive interest in Mary Smith that Pauline Fontress had shown—that Basson, by inference, had shown.

Had she come here to profess an ardor that she didn't feel, in order to render him easy to question? What had Delilah done to Samson?

The appraisal in his glance became contemptuous. The happenings of fifteen minutes ago became suddenly unpleasant. Not love, but cool cunning, had prompted her simulation of passion. Or perhaps the passion had not been simulated; but that deeper thing that he had seemed to find in her had been pretended.

He had offered her, just now, the rest of his life. She had known that when he proposed departure on the *Rex* tomorrow, he had meant no cheap and temporary liaison. She knew that he meant marriage as soon as Basson saw fit to get a divorce.

And she had offered him, in return, furtive trysts in his apartment, in some hotel in Chicago. The thing that had warped his soul for ten years, was to her nothing but a sneaking affair. He offered a life of devotion, and she preferred to be his occasional mistress.

CLARITY of thought came to him, as it had not come during the ten years since she had first betrayed his faith in her. He had thrown away a career, because he had permitted his life to be wrecked by this—strumpet. That's what she was. She was worse than that: the professional woman of easy virtue gives herself for money; she professes nothing. But this woman pretended love; this woman debased the currency of devotion. Not frankly for hire did she let herself; but sneakily she tried to enter into Dalzell's heart and brain, that she might worm from him some secret important to her or to her husband. His eyes were icy as he looked at her.

"Did your husband tell you how far you could go in questioning me, in trying to get information from me?"

"What do you mean?" she asked.

He made no effort to keep contempt from his voice.

"I mean exactly what I say. Did your husband say that anything you did would be all right with him, provided you brought back whatever it was you came to get?"

"I don't understand you, Dal."

"Don't you? Well, I'm beginning to understand you, Jerry. You want to sneak in here another afternoon; you want me to register with you under another name in some second-rate hotel in Chicago. And that's the thing that I've craved for ten years—mean meetings with a petty woman!"

"Dal, you're mad," she gasped.

"Am I? You called me that a few minutes ago. Perhaps I am. If to be mad is to want to be aboveboard, then madness is what ails me."

Into her black eyes, no longer lovely to Dalzell, came dismay.

"I think I'd better go," she said.

"I think so too," said Dalzell.

Chapter Twelve

DALZELL started forward as the door closed behind her. What madness prompted him to find flaws in the lovely Jerry? Then he halted; he had not been mad—the lovely thing he'd adored so long had never had existence. He had thought he worshipped a soul, but the soul had never been there. To dismiss from one's heart and life a person like Jerry, was a thing not to be done because of mere suspicion. If there had been nothing else but his vague feeling that her husband was somehow interested in Mary Smith, and that she had come to him at her husband's behest, he would not have dared condemn her. Believer though he was in his own frequently disjointed reasoning, he would never have condemned Jerry on that alone.

But she wanted him to take part in a furtiveness that was abhorrent to him. The cheap rites of passion were to take the place of the divine rites of love.

He turned back to the couch; the impress of her was still there. Roughly he smoothed the pillows, and as he erased the evidence of her presence there, it seemed to him that he also erased all traces of her presence in his heart.

He mixed himself a highball. It was queer how slight, after all, were the bonds that united one person to another. A breach of faith, a glimpse of feet of clay, and romance was dead. He sighed gustily. How slight, after all, had been the thing that prevented him from abandoning the most engrossing investigation that had ever come his way! If Jerry had assented when he suggested the *Rex*, he would have been directing Swayne to buy passage, to pack his bags, to telephone a dozen people that engagements might be canceled.

Why, he wouldn't have thought of Mary Smith for weeks, and then only with casual wonder at the outcome of the affair. He frowned. He felt sudden self-reproach that he had even considered

abandoning the search for the prima donna of "Star of Midnight." Jerry was right in one thing at least: the years had not aged him; youthful impetuosity had not yet left him.

THE telephone rang, and he picked it up. It was Dryon.

"Stumbled on something, Mr. Dalzell: That Ebor Basson has a wife. Swell looking girl, I'm told. Basson is her third husband, and I guess he don't go so good with her. Anyway—and this is funny—I got a tip from Chicago—I can afford long-distance calls at the rate you're paying me; and my friend there says that Mrs. Basson and Norrone had it hot and heavy a year ago. He says he doesn't think that Basson ever tumbled, but lots of people knew about it. Kind of funny, Basson trying to get Norrone clear when his wife was Norrone's sweetie! I don't know that it means anything, but it might. If Basson knew about the affair, it might mean something, though I don't see how. But you're the man who sees things where other people don't. Anyway, there it is."

"Much obliged," said Dalzell.

He eyed his drink thoughtfully, and very slowly lifted it to his lips. Jerry was cheap, then. When, in his thoughts, he had applied a harsh word to her, he had not been wrong.

But what bearing did Jerry's affair with Norrone have upon the Mary Smith matter, or the Tennant matter? Everything that he learned about this amazing case was intensely interesting, but seemed to bear no relation to any other phase of the affair. It was as though he were afforded glimpses into the lives of unrelated people. And yet something in his brain told him that these were all pieces of one puzzle, which could be connected if he were clever enough or patient enough to fit them together.

The telephone rang again.

"This is Harriet Custice," said the real-estate agent of Eighth Street. "I found out what you wanted."

Dalzell kept excitement from his voice. "Yes?" he said encouragingly.

"A girl named Jane Torrance rented an apartment on Sheridan Square about the time you mentioned. It's a little house-keeping flat on the second floor of the Ranelagh. She answers your description; she's a nurse in a private hospital. At least, she works for some doctor, and does only night duty. She gets home about half-past eight or quarter to nine every morning, and usually she sleeps most of the day. Sometimes, though, she leaves her flat around noon."

"You found out all that?"

"It happened that the superintendent of the Ranelagh was in a real-estate office when I was making inquiries. He told me all this."

"I hope he won't tell Miss Torrance inquiries were made," said Dalzell.

"I may have looked that dumb this morning, but I'm not," said the girl. "He didn't even know he was being questioned. I'm a good worker."

"I suspected you had talents," chuckled Dalzell.

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"QUIET, BUT WITH A STRANGE PERSISTENCE"

"I have plenty others," she said.
"I might try to discover them sometime," said Dalzell.

"I was hoping you would," she laughed.
"I've never been in a penthouse."

"Keep away from them; they're bad places for good girls," he laughed.

"Who told you I was good?" she invited.

"That sure instinct that tells a man," he replied.

"I hope you don't rely on it when you bet on the races," she said.

"I rarely take chances," he retorted.

"Well, when you feel a reckless mood coming on, ring me up," she said.

"You'll hear from me," said Dalzell.

He shrugged his shoulders. The pretty Miss Custice would hear from him, but only when he sent her a promised check. Reckless little devil! But most girls seemed that way nowadays. Then, as he put the telephone down, he forgot the flirtatious Miss Custice.

As he slipped into a coat, he felt that elation which only the intellectual can feel. The athlete has his triumphs on the fields of sport; the man of affairs feels a glow at a business or political triumph; the great hostess is thrilled at the success of her party. But the scientist, fumbling with his test-tubes, gets a purely intellectual thrill when an experiment turns out as he hopes. And the close reasoner feels a tremendous uplifting of the spirit when his logic is proved correct.

Starting with nothing save the imagination which could conceive a theory, and the logical type of mind which could evolve ways of proving that theory, Dalzell had seen theory become fact. Unless there had been some amazing coincidence of resemblance and of mode of living, the Jane Torrance of Sheridan Square was the Mary Smith of "Star of Midnight." He had achieved measurable triumph before, but if he did nothing more in the Smith-Tennant matter than discover the whereabouts of Mary Smith, he would have proved, to his own satisfaction at least, that he was the ablest investigator in New York. And he would know, within twenty minutes, whether or not some coincidence had led him astray.

Swayne appeared in the living-room as Dalzell placed his hand on the hall door.

"You're dining with the Bacons tonight, sir," he said. "A white tie."

Dalzell pursed his lips in an expression of doubt.

"I'm afraid I can't make it. Telephone her my deepest regrets. Send her some orchids. Say I am threatened with pneumonia and can't answer the telephone."

"Very good, sir," said Swayne.

IN the lobby of his apartment-building Dalzell hesitated. He had not yet noticed who followed him. If Kinland told the truth,—and he could imagine no reason why Kinland should have lied,—those concerned with the murder of Tennant were deeply concerned with the movements of Dalzell. But Dalzell had put a bodyguard on Dalzell. But Dalzell had not been aware of the near presence of Kinland's follower today. Yet it might be that the man had followed him to the Warman, to the Warranty, and to the real-estate office on Eighth Street. He was inclined to doubt this, however. Any-

one told to follow Dalzell would assume that his labors began not before noon. The chances were that Dalzell's activities of the forenoon had not been noted. But it was vitally important that no one should follow him now. Even so friendly a spy as that set upon him by Kinland might stumble upon the fact that Jane Torrance was Mary Smith.

He spoke to a hall man.

"I don't want to be followed when I leave here. How can we fix it?"

The hall man stared at him; his features broke suddenly into a grin. He opened a closet near the telephone and took out a uniform coat with a visored hat to match.

"Take off your own coat and hat; you can hide them under this coat. Here's my glasses. Wear those and just step into a taxi. I know the next driver in the rank. Tell him to bring back my things. What is it, Mr. Dalzell? Some dame putting the bee on you?"

The impudence was friendly; Dalzell grinned.

"Something like that, Tom."

HE slipped out of his own coat, rolled it up and held it underneath the heavy brass buttoned starter's coat which the hall man held for him. Two minutes later, unnoticed,—certainly unfollowed,—he was gliding off in a taxicab whose driver he had instructed to go to the Pennsylvania Station. On Eighth Avenue below Forty-second Street, he knocked on the glass, and the man drew up at the curb. Dalzell, in his own overcoat and hat, stepped out of the cab.

"You'll find a hat and coat inside," he said. "Take them back to Tom, the hall man at my apartment-house. If you can, don't let anyone see you give him the things. Wrap them up in a newspaper. Got it?"

The taxi man looked at the bill Dalzell gave him.

"Yes, sir. And I don't know where you went when you left me."

Dalzell smiled. Nevertheless he waited until the taxi had driven off. The man would be telling the truth if he said that he didn't know where Dalzell had gone. At Ninth Avenue Dalzell took the elevated downtown, and within half an hour after he left East Sixty-third Street, he entered the modest lobby of the Randolph. It was not really a lobby—just an entrance hall. The building was without an elevator, which would work no great hardship on the tenants, as it was only four stories tall. There was no house telephone visible. On one wall were letter-boxes with bell-buttons above them. Apartment Two-B had in its letter-box a card with the name of Miss Jane Torrance.

Dalzell looked for the stairs; they were visible beyond glass doors, but these doors were locked. He walked back to the letter-boxes and pressed the bell above the name of Jane Torrance. He heard a clicking which indicated that the latch of the glass door had been unfastened. Evidently Mary Smith—if Jane Torrance was Mary Smith—had little fear of callers. She must feel that her new identity was incapable of penetration.

He went through the door, mounted one flight of stairs, stood in semi-dark-

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ness, trying to read the number and letter on a door at the head of the stairs, when a door at the far end of the hall opened. And the voice of Mary Smith came to him.

"Were you looking for Miss Torrance?" Dalzell walked down the hall. The light from windows behind her made clear his own features but left hers obscure. Nevertheless, if her voice had not been sufficient to prove her the leading lady of "Star of Midnight," he could see her well enough to know that this was the woman whom the newspapers and the police sought.

"Good afternoon, Miss Smith," he said. A lesser woman would have screamed, or fainted, or slammed the door in his face. Somehow he had known that Mary Smith would do none of these things. Somehow he had known that she would do exactly as she did do.

"Won't you come in?" she said, standing aside.

Dalzell entered the apartment. She closed the door and preceded him through a tiny hall into a living-room. He knew at once that this was a home. It was a modest home, but there were photographs on a table, flowers in a silver vase, books and magazines scattered around, in homelike disorder. Parted curtains revealed a bedroom, on the dresser of which were brushes, cosmetics, and these latter not in drug-store jars, but in cut-glass bottles and silver containers.

"You must be very clever to have found me," she said. She sat down, and indicated a chair for Dalzell. From a box she took a cigarette, offering one to Dalzell, which he took. She snapped a tiny gold briquet and puffed luxuriously. She seemed, Dalzell inconspicuously thought, the sort of person who savored everything to its uttermost.

"How did you find me, Mr. Dalzell?" she asked.

"How do you know my name?" he countered.

"No other man in New York, unless gossip rates you too highly, could have done it. And now that you've done it, Mr. Dalzell, what?"

"That's what I want to ask you," he retorted.

HER composure was, he thought, the most admirable thing he had ever witnessed. There had been terror in her voice when she spoke to him over the telephone; there must be terror in her heart now. But none of it was visible in her eyes. And what lovely eyes they were! He had thought, as recently as an hour ago, that Jerry's eyes were the most beautiful in the world. He knew that he had been wrong. He had thought that at thirty Jerry had the most beautiful face and the loveliest figure he had ever seen; but at twenty-two or less Jerry could never have matched this girl in any detail of feminine beauty. She was lovelier off the stage than on, if that was possible. And there was a candor, a fineness in her black eyes, that Jerry's, he suddenly realized, had never had. Ninety minutes ago he had believed himself still in love with Jerry, more in love with her than he had ever been with anyone in all his life. Now he knew that what he had felt for Jerry had been a puppy-love that through the years had deceived him into thinking it

was something deeper. Because Jerry had treated him badly, he had told himself that he loved her, and could never love anyone else, until it had become with him a fixed idea. Now he knew that he had never really cared for anyone in his life until this minute.

IT was absurd; it was insane: but it was a fact. He was in love with Mary Smith, if that was her name. A premonition that something like this would happen to him had made him refuse to witness her a second time in her performance of "Star of Midnight," and had made him refuse to meet her.

"Why do you stare?" she asked.

He flushed furiously.

"Forgive me," he said.

"How did you find me?" she asked.

He shook his head.

"Why did you run away?" he countered.

"To hide," she replied.

The absurd simplicity of that answer struck her as it did Dalzell. Embarrassment left him as he smiled with her. And embarrassment's departure brought sanity back to him. Jerry had been more right than she knew in calling him mad. A man as unstable of emotion as he was, could certainly not deem himself normal. People spoke of hearts caught upon the rebound, but that sort of thing applied only to callow youth, not to maturity. There was something wrong with a man who fancied himself in love for ten years, and in the middle of a moment ceased to love, to fall in love with some one else in the middle of another moment.

He was old enough by this time to differentiate between a wish to week-end with a girl, and a wish to spend the rest of his life with her. Or was any man ever old enough to acquire that sort of wisdom? Was there ever a time in a man's life when a curve or an eyelash couldn't delude him? Was there such a thing as love, after all? Wasn't it rather, this thing called love, a prudish way of dressing up something else? In a civilization that for centuries has professed that passion is not nice, has the word love come to be used as disguise? Love didn't hit a man between the eyes without warning.

"Why were you afraid of Ebor Basson?" he asked.

Her eyes opened wide, and he read bewilderment in them.

"Did Tennant tell you over the phone why he wanted to see you?" she asked.

He shook his head.

"Then how did you know about Basson?"

"How did I know you were here?" he countered.

"I don't understand that. How could you find me? I took such pains—"

"Too great pains. Anyone should have been able to tell that the Warman was not your home. The kind of girl that you are couldn't live in that apartment."

"How do you know what kind of girl I am?" she asked.

He shrugged.

"One never knows." He smiled grimly; earlier today he would have sworn that he knew character, that certainly he could know the nature of a woman to whom he had given his heart. But now he knew that the wisest character-analyst knows



"What's that they're saying, Henry?"

"They're saying, 'The average age of GOLDEN WEDDING RYE is 4 years old . . . and it's ALL whiskey.' But that won't interest you."

"Want to bet on *that*, too, Henry?"



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as little about human nature as the greatest scientist knows about the universe. "One can guess, however," he added. "It didn't seem to me that anyone like yourself could be content for several months in rooms devoid of ornament, of the things that make a place livable."

She nodded comprehendingly. "That was clever. But still—to find me here: I don't understand that."

HE grinned like a small boy who has just mystified his companions with a newly acquired bit of legerdemain.

"If I told you how, you wouldn't respect me. Logic," he went on, more profoundly than he realized, "is never respected. The minute a process of reasoning is explained, it becomes so simple that no one admires it. I want to talk about you. Why did you hide?"

"What are you going to do with me?" she asked.

"Do with you? What do you mean?" "There's been a murder; the papers say that the police are seeking me in connection with that murder."

"I'm no policeman," he told her. "But to shield some one suspected of murder, would make you a criminal."

"Then the only thing to do," he laughed, "would be to prove that you had nothing to do with the crime. Then I couldn't be blamed for not turning you over to the police. Let's begin at the beginning."

"Let's not begin at all." Her lovely voice was almost harsh. "Mr. Dalzell, I had nothing to do with Tennant's death. I've committed no crime. Surely an innocent person has a right to live her own life as she sees fit. Can't you forget you've seen me?"

"You ask too much of a man," he smiled.

She ignored the flattery. "I've done you no harm, Mr. Dalzell. You must realize that if I went into hiding, I must have had a good reason. A woman does not give up a success like mine unless she thinks it necessary."

"But it might not be necessary," he told her.

"I think I'm the best judge of that," she said.

"Is anyone ever a good judge of his or her own predicaments? The fact that we are personally involved in matters, makes us see those matters in an exaggerated way. People kill themselves over trifles; but the lenses of their own eyes distort the trifles until they seem tremendous, terrifying. You say you have committed no crime. Then what have you to fear, what have you to flee from, why should you abandon a career that must have been dear to you?"

"Suppose I replied that it was my own business?"

"I'd not consider you rude, if that's what you mean; but I would say that frequently we aren't able to judge our own business. Miss Smith, two nights ago you made an appeal to me. Then, or the next time you phoned me, you stated that I had more power than any other man in New York. That was an exaggeration, of course. But I have a certain influence in certain quarters. Now, I'm well enough off, Miss Smith, but I am by no means extremely wealthy. If I hold no city or State or Federal office. If I

have power or influence, it can only be because I have brains, Miss Smith. I think I have proved by finding you that I have a certain type of mentality. I'm at least ten years older than you are; I think I am, in matters not affecting myself, fairly dispassionate. In view of these things, don't you think I'd be a bit more competent to judge the importance of an affair that concerned you than you would be yourself?"

"But suppose that I don't choose to take you or anyone else into my confidence?" she retorted.

"Then I should have to find out, in my own way, what it is that you do not wish to confide in me."

Her black eyes glowed with anger. "But what right have you to interfere with my affairs?"

"I haven't any right at all, except that a murder has been committed, that I knew Tennant, and that I think you know something about the causes that lay behind his killing."

"But I assure you, I give you my word of honor, that I don't know who killed him!" she cried. Anger left her tones. Into that thrilling voice came pleading, an appeal difficult to resist. "Won't you believe me?"

"I'll believe that you don't know who killed Tennant. But I believe that if I knew all that you know, I could find out who killed him. I'm trained in a certain thing—call it a profession; and things mean more to me than they do to you, or to the average person. The facts, Miss Smith, that your apartment at the Warman was scantily furnished, that you left the hotel every morning at about eight o'clock, and that Ohlmann paid you in cash, made me able to discover that you were living on Sheridan Square under the name of Jane Torrance. Before I found you, I knew that you were posing as a nurse."

"I don't see how you did it," she murmured.

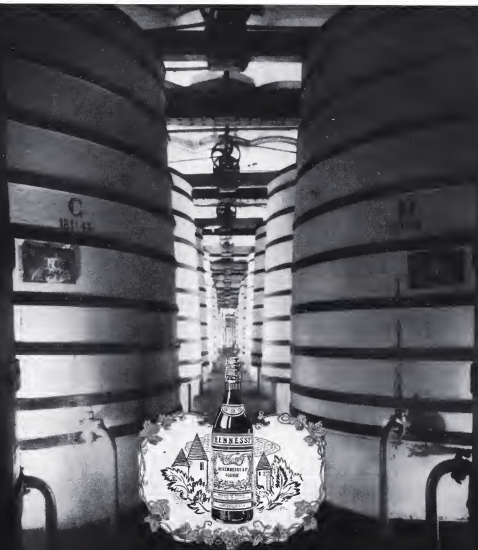
"I had nothing more than those three facts to go upon: I read into them certain other facts. Don't you suppose, aren't you willing to believe, that if I knew all the facts behind your flight from the Prince Theater I would be able to deduce from them conclusions that would never occur to you?"

"But I don't care what you might deduce," she said.

"Murder is a serious offense; it's the duty of every citizen who thinks he can clear up the mystery of a murder to do everything in his power to arrive at a solution. I'm curious, Miss Smith, terribly curious. I'm interested always in the affairs of everyone I meet. Sometimes there's no justification for my curiosity, but this time there is. I'm not going to drop a matter as important as this simply because a lovely girl asks me to."

"AND if I don't talk, will you turn me over to the police?"

"You know better than that. But I won't need to turn you over to the police. I'm no superman, no genius, Miss Smith. What I've done, other men can do. The New York Police Department isn't composed of morons. I simply have a faculty for stumbling quickly upon the right trail; but Inspector Loremus, who's



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handling the Tennant case, is no fool. If you left a trail that I could follow, perhaps I left a trail that Loremus can follow."

"You mean that he might have seen you come here?" Quick alarm was in her voice.

"I can't think so. But the people who killed Tennant are keeping an eye on me, with the intention, it seems, of doing to me what they did to Tennant."

"Killing you?" Fright was in her voice. "Why?"

"I can't answer that. All I can figure, is that they know I'm looking for you, and perhaps don't want me to find you. It doesn't make sense."

"Could they have followed you here?" Dalzell shook his head.

"I doubt it very much. But I asked the doorman at your hotel questions about this morning; if he happens to tell Loremus what I asked, Loremus might put two and two together. You aren't safe."

"I'll go somewhere else," she said.

"That's absurd. I know, you pull your hat-him over your eyes and per-

haps do your hair differently, and there've been no photographs of you published—but still, Miss Smith, at any moment some one will recognize you. I think you're mad not to tell me what there is to be told."

"Why should I trust you?" she asked. "You trusted me Monday night, before you'd ever seen me," he reminded her.

She nodded assent. "Why had he ever thought that Jerry's throat was lovely, that the carriage of her head was regal?"

"I did. I had to." Her black eyes regarded him almost solemnly. "You're the kind of a man a woman would trust." She came to a sudden decision. "I'll tell you everything, Mr. Dalzell."

"Only those who hate well can love well," commented Dalzell when Mary Smith had told him her story—a story not only extraordinary in itself, but prophetic of still more dramatic events to come. . . . In the next, the December, issue.

SECOND BEST MAN

(Continued from page 43)

yesterday you balled up the troop in squadron drill. Last week you pulled another boner at guard mount. If you meant what you say about my kid, you'd go out an' soldier. Nothin' would stop you. You'd win you a top sergeant's job, if you had to—"

Brock, livid with anger, took a step toward Carney. "That'll be all! If you wasn't an old man—"

That was more than the tough old top could stand. An old man, eh? A man who had been smashing tough soldiers about for thirty years!

The habit of a lifetime of rough soldiering drove Sergeant Carney blindly. He was a big man, not as fast, maybe, as once he had been, but as strong. And more cunning. He feinted, shifted his feet, and smashed his bony fist into Brock's face. Brock fell, taking the chair by his side with him. He lay with one knee twisted up, like a dead man. Sergeant Carney stared down at him; and then—he turned and stared at his daughter. She stood on the door-sill behind him. About her slender body she held clutched a flowered cotton kimono. Her blue eyes were distorted with fright.

"You get back to your bed," her father said thickly. "Beat it."

But she saw Brock then. She moved toward him slowly, her eyes staring. She knelt and laid a hand on his face. There was a little blood on that face, just under the nose. Jackie Carney pushed her small white hand up under the fallen man's hair. She turned her head, looking up at her father. "You killed him," she said. "You—you—!" Her voice broke into great choking sobs.

"I've knocked out tougher men than him—than he'll ever be," Sergeant Carney said. "If he had any guts in him! I only tapped him. See—he's comin' to now. You beat it. Look at the way you're dressed! Ain't you got any shame?"

Jackie Carney pulled her disarranged wrap tighter about her body. Brock sat

up, his eyes vague, his head shaking. He got to his feet. His eyes cleared swiftly. Snake-like they gleamed. His great arm pushed Jackie Carney away. He raised his great fists. He shuffled his feet, just a little. His eyes never left those of the other man. There was no one in that room but himself and this man who had beaten him down, struck him viciously, without warning! "Put 'em up, Carney!"

Carney pushed the table away. He raised his own gnarled hands. But Jackie Carney put herself under Brock's up-raised arms. "No—no," she said faintly. "No, Bill."

Bill Brock could feel the softness of her hair against his jaw. He could smell the familiar clean odor of her head. Her bare arm touched his hands. He said, across her head, to her father: "To hell with you! If you're a top sergeant, then—Oh, to hell with you!" Bill Brock's voice broke into a hoarse sob. He turned, grabbed his campaign hat from the table and pushed blindly through the door.

A TROOP had a new captain: a harsh, tactless man. Some said a woman had turned him down; some that a fall at polo had jarred his head up a little too much. Others said he was just plain mean. The men of A Troop described him more picturesquely. They said he was a "military so-and-so." But they all admitted he knew his job and was whipping a finer edge on the troop than it had ever known. The only thing was, he was almost inhuman in his fanatical pursuit of duty. There was no sentiment in him, no laughs, no friendly quips with the men such as the good-natured Captain Butler had always been putting out.

Even to old Top Sergeant Carney, he was sour. Before, it was common talk that Carney "ran the troop." Soldiers from other outfits used to call A Troop "Carney's Horse." Well, after all, the old man had been top sergeant of the outfit for twenty years. Many a captain

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had come and gone in that time—and the wise ones deferred to the old soldier. But not Captain Fasher! It was even whispered that in the first week he had bowled out the old top sergeant.

The men wondered, a little uneasy. Strange things were going on. What was the good of having a well-drilled troop, perfect discipline, and yet bad morale? Here was old Carney, once good-natured enough in spite of his roaring voice and frequent bawling-out, going about silently all the time. And with that funny, ugly look in his eyes! Jumping on men, he was now, for next to nothing.

And take Brock: There was a guy who would give you the shirt off his back. Always had a laugh for everything. Got along with everyone, especially with old Carney. Now he never spoke to the top except when duty made it necessary. He never laughed. Never sat and sang in front of the radio in the day-room the way he used to. Just sat on his bunk, ruminating all the time. Ate his meals in a hurry, beat it right out of the mess-room.

And this tale the troop clerk was putting out. According to him, Brock had come in the orderly-room and asked for a transfer. The new captain just looked at him out of those ice-cold eyes of his. It was plain he thought Brock couldn't "take it." Couldn't soldier under a strict officer. "You mean you want to be busted to a private?" the captain had said. "That's the way any man that leaves this troop goes."

"That's all right with me, sir," Brock was reported to have said. The clerk said the Captain's eyes grew even harder. Colder. "There'll be no transfers till I see what I've got here in the way of soldiers," the Captain said then. "But there may be some changes—in rank. That's all."

Well, what would happen next?

SOMETHING did happen—swiftly, fatally. There was an ugly, quarrelsome man in the troop named Cogan. The men said he was using *marijuana*. But this night he brought a bottle of *tequila* into the squad-room, and in a fit of drunken madness he started a fight with the big horsehoof Baisic—sober, easy-going big fellow. But Baisic fought back. He was beating Cogan up when the First Sergeant came into the squad-room, dragged them apart and cursed Cogan to his bunk. Everything seemed over. The barracks quieted for the night, lights out. But in the morning Cogan was absent. He had stolen a pistol, and he left an insulting note for the Captain, telling him what he thought of his troop, of himself, and in writing branding himself as a deserter.

That morning Captain Fasher gave the troop clerk another story—the most dramatic one he ever had to gossip out of an orderly-room.

"Write out an order at once," Captain Fasher said in his cold voice, "reducing First Sergeant Carney to a sergeant, and making Sergeant Brock First Sergeant. And if he turns out not to have sense enough to confine a man like Cogan, we'll find another top sergeant."

Brock read the order making him a first sergeant with bitter pleasure. "Ah!" he said, and he walked over to the tailor-shop and had the insignia sewed on. At noon mess he walked straight to the head

of the non-coms' table, and he sat rigidly on the stool that Sergeant Carney had polished to a high brightness over many years. Carney, far down the table, didn't lift his eyes from his plate. The other men worked hard at their food, never looking at one or the other. And when the meal was over, Brock took the fatigue-list for afternoon workers, cleared his throat, and read loudly and clearly his first official order: "For quartermaster fatigue, forage warehouses—Privates: Blaine, Pulzick, Craven. . . . Charge of party, Sergeant Carney."

THAT night at the post exchange movies Brock saw Jackie Carney for the first time since her father had struck him down. He drew her away from the two girls she was with and walked with her out under the desert stars. They moved in silence up to the horse-show grounds. They stood by the bench—that same bench. Brock put an arm about Jackie Carney's shoulders. She lifted a troubled white face up to him. "Don't kiss me, Bill. Don't! I can't ever let you kiss me again. I just came with you—I didn't want a scene there in front of everybody."

He shook her. "You love me, don't you? You said it enough. If it was true, nothing what happened could change it. You said when I got to be a top, you'd marry me. Well, I'm a top. I don't have to ask anybody now but the Captain. Here, come here—"

She broke out of his grip. "Leave me alone!" She began to cry, passionately. Brock could see her lovely face faintly lighted by the bright sky. His heart felt heavy and strange within him. He tried to touch her, but she pushed him off as she walked toward the post.

"Listen! Listen, Jackie," Brock pleaded desperately. "What have I done? I made the grade, didn't I? Fair an' honest."

She stopped and faced him, rubbing at her eyes with the back of her hand. She said: "He isn't just some sergeant whose stripes you've stolen: he's my father. An' I never loved anybody like him in all my life."

"So you were lyin' to me, then? You said that same piece to me once."

"You don't understand. You couldn't understand. You're too cruel. All soldiers—they're all cruel. They're hard and terrible. That captain! And now you. You take the stripes off a man who taught you your recruit drill. You even say you won them honestly! How could they be honest?" She gritted her teeth, and her eyes blazed. She stared up at him, utter contempt in her face. She mocked his words, accenting them harshly: "You made the grade! You won them fairly and honestly! What you did is break an old man's heart. Killed the love I had for you. You've made a laughingstock of a better soldier than you'll ever be, all over the regiment!"

Miserably Brock stared down at her. "Only a week ago," he said desperately, "you were giving him hell for hitting me. Sayin' things to him like you are to me now. An' him callin' me a bum soldier! Now things is the other way, an' you say you hate me."

"He lost his head," she said. "He was sorry for it afterward. He tried to tell you, and you snarled back at him. He told me that night. But you, you're not

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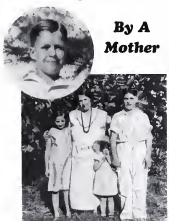
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"I often contrast my four fine, healthy youngsters with mother. We don't fill them up with medicines the way people used to in mother's day. Thanks to my doctor's directions we just use Nujol regularly. It has not upset their stomachs, and even when they had whooping cough they only had serum and Nujol.

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man enough to go to him now. No. Sergeant Brannan came away with the story of what you did at mess today. Standing up there, shaming him before all those troopers by putting him on a dirty fatigue bag, like a day laborer! And almost in front of our house, the job was, too!"

"He's put me on a many of them," Brock said, and he tried to laugh. And as he reached for her, she swung about and started to run. He stood watching, listening to her sobs getting fainter. "Well, that's the end of that," he said.

THE troop wasn't done with Cogan yet. He was picked up by a deputy sheriff near Bisbee, drunk, a week later. He was confined in the post guardhouse, and general court charges were preferred against him. The evidence was ample to prove desertion. Cogan knew that, knew it meant two years in Alcatraz for him as soon as that court voted.

While the charges were being investigated and approved, Cogan, with other prisoners, went to work in front of a sentry. There was a new road being built out to the target-range, and a half dozen of the "long-timers" were working under three sentries who had not reckoned with the viciousness that heat, and the lack of an habitual drug, could arouse in a man like Cogan. The man caught one of the sentries off guard, seized his rifle, and under its threat disarmed the other two. Then, after binding the guards with strips of oat-sacks and hiding them behind a clump of mesquite well off the road, Cogan led the admiring prisoners off toward the hills.

It wasn't until Recall that night that the outrage was discovered. As soon as the officer of the day reported it to the colonel, the colonel called Captain Fasher. When Captain Fasher jammed the receiver of his orderly-room phone down, he cursed once heartily, and directed the troop clerk to get Top Sergeant Brock. He glared at Sergeant Brock. "All this," he said, "comes from a mistake of judgment. If Sergeant Carney had confined this Cogan for bringing liquor into the barracks and fighting with another soldier—"

"Yes sir."

"The troop is to move out at once. They went east toward the mountains. I'm new in this country—have you any suggestions, Sergeant?"

Brock smiled with deep satisfaction. Here was a man who thought he could soldier. And here was a situation that would prove it—prove it to all of them—and most of all, prove it to Carney, who had mocked him, then tumbled himself.

"We need some them Apache scouts out of the headquarters troop, sir. Cogan ain't those men went with him are old-timers. They know the ropes—that all civil officers will be warned, an' the railroads watched. They'll make for the hills an' hide out till they think the search has let down, an' interest in them is blown over. They can get chow up there from them Mexican nut-gatherers an' sheep-herders. I know the country. Hunted up there often. I would say, sir, we spread the troop out into squads. Give each squad a zone of action. The squads can form forages at wide intervals—say a hundred yards. Each squad have

one of them Indians. I seen them track. Aint nothin' they'll miss. We'll be mounted, an' Cogan's outfit will be afoot. We ought to have them by noon tomorrow."

There was an appreciative glow in Captain Fasher's hard face. "That's the way I like to hear my top sergeants talk," he said. "Turn out the troop, one feed of grain, one cold meal, at once."

Sergeant Brock saluted briskly. "Very good, sir!"

It was just getting light. The sharp gravel from the old river-bed that cut through the high mountains clicked and rattled under the horses' feet. Brock was riding with the center squad. There was no corporal with this squad, he having had, two nights before, a difference of opinion with the chief of police of the town, and not having won the argument. So before the troop moved out, First Sergeant Brock had made an appointment.

"You'll be in charge of the fourth squad, Sergeant Carney," he had said coldly.

Carney's face had flamed. He was a platoon commander. He almost said something—something that would have landed him in the guardhouse then and there; but old Sergeant Brady spoke up—casually, spitting as he spoke: "I guess all us sergeants might as well do the same, eh, Sergeant Brock? Won't be no platoon command."

"That's up to you," Brock said. "I aint runnin' your platoons."

Now Carney rode alone, the narrowness of the trail bringing him close to Brock. They said no word. They hadn't spoken to each other all through the night. In front rode the impassive figure of the Apache soldier guide, his eyes alive, seeking, gleaming, in his dull immobile brown face. He stiffened, spot, pointed. He looked back at Brock. "Him up here," he said without the slightest infection of excitement in his voice. "All go by here—one, two, t'ree—six soldier walkin'."

"How long ago?" Brock said, his voice shaking a little. He was dazed by the man's reply.

"On'y f' minute, maybe. All tired. Maybe sleep now."

"Assemble the squad, Sergeant Carney," said Brock. "And quietly."

CARNEY never lifted his eyes. He turned his horse, waved his hat and signaled the assembly to the troopers who rode out to the left and right. Brock rode ahead with the Apache, whose darting eyes never left the ground in front of him. The trail was widening. They turned about a huge fallen boulder, and almost blundered out into a level piece of ground with sparse grass covering it, and a stand of cottonwood trees near its center. And there was a ruinous-looking adobe house under the trees.

"Gottum smoke," the Indian said calmly. "Eat now. We shoot?"

Ah—would they shoot? That's what the savage in this Indian wanted. Cogan and his gang had three rifles. They were under the cover of impenetrable 'dobe walls. And if he with his men crossed that open space—

Brock left the Indian to watch the 'dobe house. There was no question in his mind that the men they were after were in that shack. Smoke came from its crumbling

"I feel fine, *now* . . .



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cough.' Two days later her
cough was gone!"



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COLD, THEN
COUGHING STARTS



PERTUSSIN DOCTORS KNOW Per-
tussin quickly stimu-
lates throat glands!
helps nature cure your cough

chimney. And its broken walls and sash-
less windows indicated plainly that it had
long been uninhabited. He explained the
situation to his eager men, and as he
talked in a low voice, he was conscious
of old Carney's eyes watching him. He
knew why Carney watched him that way.
And he cursed inwardly. His was the
decision to make. His the responsibility.
Nobody here could share it with him. The
Captain was far off to the left, miles
away. There was no other officer with
the troop. Had there been any other non-
com except Carney there, he would have
talked it over with him. But not with
Carney. Not with that bitter-eyed, jeal-
ous old-timer, who was bopping and pray-
ing, no doubt, that he would make a
mistake. Ball the whole show up! For
if he did, they both knew what would
happen to him: There'd be a new top
in the troop by night.

"Now listen," Brock said. "Surprise
is the idea here. They don't know we
got them spotted. I'm goin' to have you
go at 'em mounted, as foragers with the
pistol. At my signal—"

"Just a minute, Sergeant Brock."

Brock stood in amazement at old Car-
ney. But Carney, as calm as though
reporting his platoon, went on: "You ain't
got room in this here trail to deploy.
You got the choice of goin' out of here in
columns o' twos, in which case they can
knock us off like ripe apples before we
even get started. Or you got to deploy
out there in the open under fire."

Unable to speak because of his mount-
ing rage, Brock glared at Carney. And
his rage was increased by the fact that
he knew the old man was right. An old
private said: "You think they'd fire on
us—on soldiers out o' the same outfit!"

He said it to Carney, not to Brock;
and Carney answered: "They's a murder-
er with Cogan. Brull, guy hit a soldier
out o' F Troop over the head with a rifle.
He knows what's comin' to him if he's
taken. An' there's another one there was
wain't to be took to Leavenworth for
twenty years. An' Cogan—well, you know
what he is."

ALL the men were looking at Carney.
Impatiently Brock kicked at his
mount. "We aint got time for no *babla*
here, men." He raised his hand from his
holster. The red sun, just rising, gleamed
on the barrel of the heavy automatic pis-
tol in his fist. The words "Follow me!"
were forming in his throat, when Carney
spurred his horse up beside him.

The old man's faded eyes now blazed
with feeling. "Brock! Brock! Don't let
your feelin's against me hurt these guys
here. These men's entitled to a fair deal.
They's entitled to the best there is in
the way of experience from their non-
coms. I had more service than you. I
seen more action. I had things happen
none of you men here would believe. You
go out there the way you said, an' some
of us aint comin' back."

"So that's it!" Brock said harshly.
"Cold feet, eh? An' you're the guy said
I wasn't fit to be a top sergeant!"

The old man never wavered before
those fierce words. "You can't shame me,
Brock," he said in a steady voice. "You
done that—done it better already than
anything you can say now. But I want
to say my say—"

"I'm in command here!" Brock said.
"You take my orders and keep your trap
shut!"

The old private began to mutter. Brock
thrust his jaw out at him. "You got some
advice to put out too, Ryan?"

THE private swallowed. He looked
away from Brock. He looked patheti-
cally toward Carney. "I soldiered with
Sergeant Carney since we was both re-
cruits. I was there when he won the
Certificate o' Merit at Pekin. I aint
goin' to listen to nobody call him a cow-
ard. An' it seems to me a man with
all that service might have a idea worth
listenin' to. I don't mind goin' into
action against some enemy. I got three
campaign ribbons to prove it. But when
it comes to bein' ripped up by a Spring-
field rifle and by an American soldier—"

"They're not American soldiers," Brock
said harshly. He glared around at the
other men, from face to face. "Now we
got to votin' here," he said with a sneer,
"any other guys think maybe Carney,
who couldn't hold his stripes, would make
a better leader than me?"

There was a heavy silence. The men
looked from one to the other. Their eyes
came back, resting on Carney. Then one
of them, a young soldier in his first hitch,
said in a shaky voice: "I think it wouldn't
do any harm to listen to what Sergeant
Carney has to say." There was a mur-
mur of assent from the others. Brock's
face darkened with anger. He felt sick
inside. So his triumph was a hollow one,
after all. He was just a guy with a cloth
diamond sewed on his sleeve. Not a real
top sergeant. Not to those men, anyway.
Carney was the top still, to them—in
spite of all the troop orders in the world.

"Let's hear what the great Carney's
got to say," Brock said, and his eyes
glared at the old sergeant.

Carney said:
"Surround this place and cover the
shack. Send word back to the Captain.
When they knows the whole troop's
around them, an' is goin' to stay till they
surrender—" The old man shrugged.
"Soon's their bellies begin to rumble,
they'll come out, all right. And there
won't be no shootin', either."

Brock could tell by the faces of the
men that they agreed with Carney. He
shook with ugliness as he sensed this tacit
deposition of himself because of the ob-
vious good judgment Carney exhibited.
He couldn't be honest with himself now,
because of the bitter chagrin in him. He
couldn't face himself and admit that his
own plan was conceived, more with an
eye to its spectacular aspect than all
round success. He hadn't thought of his
men, only of himself. Of the glory of
dashing leadership, instant violent action.

But now his heart was bursting with
injured pride. They had let him down.
That damned Carney! He was having
his inning now, and he knew it. That
innocent pleading look he had was faked.
Laughing up his sleeve, he was. And
when they got back, the tale would be
all over the troop, all over the regiment!
Jackie Carney would hear it, and laugh.
When it came to a pinch, the men listened
to the real top sergeant—not to the man
who had stolen his stripes through an
angered captain who hardly knew either
of them as soldiers.



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Sergeant Brock swallowed. He found his throat dry. And with a fierce anger he felt that weakness of his coming on. Tears! Tears like a damned girl burning up under her eyelids.

"All right, men," Brock said. "That's all right with me. Stay here, under cover. Carney'll look after you all right."

Brock swung his horse about, pointing him up the trail. He could still see old Carney's starting eyes. He laughed.

Carney rode up, trotting hard. "Brock! Brock! What you goin' to do?"

"You get the hell back there with them men of yours," Brock said. "You get back there or you get a set of charges put against you."

The old man had Brock by the sleeve of his shirt. "Bill, for God's sake, listen to me!" But Bill Brock was beyond listening to anybody. He spurred his horse into a gallop, brushed by the staring Apache scout and raced into the clearing. They heard him coming, and a man breaking firewood near the door looked up, calling. The man was Cogan, and Brock called above the beat of his horse's hoofs: "Put 'em up, Cogan!"

COGAN stood staring, his mouth open. A rifle banged from the house; then two more shots. Brock shook his pistol above his head. It was still too far for that yet. And it never got any closer. With the suddenness of a lightning-flash Brock's horse went down. Dust tore up about him. The terrific impact with the hard earth almost stunned Brock, but he had presence of mind enough to remember that he was being fired at, and that no horse fell like that unless hit between the eyes.

In the cover of the dust-cloud Brock rolled behind the dead animal. He peered across its neck. He could see the sun glint on the rifles in the shack. Not over fifty yards, he thought, and he fired toward those rifles. The rifles answered him. The carcass of the horse shook. Dust jumped up close by him. Brock looked back toward the outlet of the trail. Nobody there; not even the Indian. He rubbed the sweat from his eyes. He cursed. He cursed Sergeant Carney for a coward, for a yellow soldier. For a man who will leave a troop mate! And he cursed himself for a fool. He was done now. He shivered with bitterness as he pictured the arrival of the Captain, piloted by Carney. He could see those bleak, boring eyes as the Captain heard what a damned fool he had been. The shame of being found, lying helplessly there behind a dead horse, his job botched to the point of absurdity!

"To hell with that!" Sergeant Brock said aloud. "They ain't goin' to laugh at me. I'll take a slug in the guts first." He tried to rise, to get going at a run for the shack. But he couldn't even get to his knees. So that was it. Not just a bruise where his leg was numbly aching. Busted! The bone broken clean below the knee. "My God!" Brock said. And now the tears came running from his eyes. And cold sweat poured down into them.

Brock heard a voice—a loud, hoarse voice, the voice of Cogan. He was asking names. He wanted to know the name of this fool. "Top Sergeant Brock, damn you! An' you'd better come out and turn

yourselves over!" Then Brock laughed. Many the time he'd helped the man Cogan, who was dumb with horses. And once in a fight across the line in a spig saloon, he had stood back of the quarrel—some man and saved him from a Mexican's knife. Cogan must have thought of that too. He called: "Listen, Brock. We ain't got nothin' ag'in' you. You be on the level with us, an' we'll come out an' fix you up. You're hit, aint you?"

Brock thought swiftly. "I'm busted to hell," he said. "Both legs broke. An' I'm bleedin' to death."

"That's tough," Cogan said. "You give me your word you won't shoot. And tell me on the level is there any more men around. Are you alone?"

Brock laughed loudly. "I can tell you that honest enough. I'm alone all right. You don't think decent soldiers would leave a pal like this here to die, do you?"

Brock hoped Sergeant Carney heard that. He had shouted it loudly enough. "All right," Cogan said. "We're pushin' off in a minute. If you found this joint, somebody else can. We'll fix you up an' send a spig back here to get you back."

"Okay," Brock said, and he thumbled down the safety of his pistol. He looked over the horse. All six of the deserters had come out in front of the cabin. They held their rifles ready. They were all looking curiously toward him. Brock thought: "I didn't promise not to crack down on any of the others, only on Cogan. Or is that being on the level? I don't know. I made one mistake today already." But Sergeant Brock never decided that point of ethics. A strange sight, like a silent, slow-moving cinema unrolled before his startled eyes. He couldn't believe he was seeing it, so unreal and precise it appeared. First he saw Sergeant Carney emerge from behind the adobe shack. Then the rest of the squad spread evenly on his right and left, all of them on foot and walking, it seemed to Brock, like so many stalking cats. They simply appeared there magically, their rifles pointing at the backs of the unsuspecting men before them. Brock couldn't hear a word. He saw the deserters turn, but make hardly any other movement. Then their rifles dropped, and their hands went up, all very slowly.

Then Sergeant Carney came and put the first-aid bandage and the two long splints on his leg. He too didn't say a word. And then, it must have been the sun or something, but Sergeant Brock didn't remember much more.

IN the post hospital that night he felt better. They'd fixed that aching leg up, given him a big shot of army brandy too. He felt a very hearty glow. And here was the Colonel of the regiment and his own Captain calling on him like he was a general or something. They'd made a regular hero of him. But even the glow of the army brandy could not quell the rising guilt in his heart. "Come clean. Come clean, Sergeant Brock," that rising guilt said. Sergeant Brock came clean. It was hard, but he did it. The two officers listened without a word. And even when he finished, they said nothing. "Maybe they'll even bust me to a buck private," he thought bitterly. "But I had to do it. Old Carney had it comin' to him."

The Colonel hadn't said a word, but he'd looked very serious as Brock told his tale. Captain Fasher, just watched with those bleak unreadable eyes of his. He didn't say anything either, until he got up to leave. Then he said: "Best not to worry, Brock. Wait till you get back to duty for that." It wasn't said unkindly; and Captain Fasher tried to smile; though his face wasn't made for smiling.

THE glow from the army brandy had faded. An empty, very lonely feeling took hold of Sergeant Brock. And his leg began to ache horribly. Well, they'd make Carney temporary top right away. Couldn't make him permanently while he lay in hospital: army regulations protected a man from that. But when he came back—Captain would have to do it. A man with his experience and sense of discipline would realize what a bad business it would be for the troop morale to have him rank Carney now.

Bitter these thoughts were for Sergeant Brock. He'd had his chance and missed it: missed it because he couldn't control his anger or his pride. What little chance he might have had with Jackie Carney was gone now. . . . He dozed, writhing with bad dreams; and from the voices in the dreams he heard real voices, and he looked up, and there was Jackie. "Gee, Bill," she said softly, "how you feel? Look, I brought you something."

"That's fine," Bill Brock said. "It's angel cake," Jackie said. "It was for Dad's birthday. A whole half of it."

Sergeant Brock wasn't looking at any angel cake. He was looking with all the misery in him into Jackie Carney's deep blue eyes. "I guess you heard? From your old man. Well—"

Jackie Carney dropped the angel cake. With her two small hands she lifted the great brown one nearest to her. She held it close against her soft cheek. Her blue eyes were bigger—bigger than any eyes Bill Brock had ever seen. "Except maybe in that little thoroughbred mare of the Captain's," he thought. And the thought choked him. And it was worse when those tears came into the big eyes.

"Sure I heard," Jackie Carney said. "Pop just came back from the headquarters. The Colonel sent him. Gee, it was swell of you, Bill! It made me awful proud of you."

Bill Brock's other big hand reached up and touched Jackie Carney's fluffed-out brown hair. "I'd rather have that happen than be a top sergeant, anyways," he said softly. "An' I'd rather kiss you once, Jackie, than be a general."

Jackie Carney laughed through her tears. "I don't want you to be a general," she said. "The top sergeant of A Troop's good enough for me."

"They got that job for a better man." "There isn't any better man, not in A Troop," Jackie Carney said.

"Your father's a better man; I guess he proved that clear enough today."

"I guess he's too good a man," said Jackie; and she grinned. "So that's why the Colonel sent for him: to promote him to Regimental Sergeant Major. A Troop and I have got to get along with the second best. . . . Did you say something about kissing me, Top Sergeant Brock?"

"What I meant!" whooped Bill Brock.

KING'S X

(Continued from page 55)

guys are so awfully bright," he says, "and coppers are so dumb, why don't you go crooked? Why hang on to them newspaper jobs and that coffee-and-sinkers pay? Why not stake yourselves to a rod and jimmy apiece, and go out and grab yourselves off some of this soft dough?"

"It'd be too easy," says Sload.

"Is that so?" says Noonan.

"Yes, that's so," Larkin puts in.

And the repartee might've ended right there, and it should've. But Noonan and the boys are plenty steamed.

"I'll tell you why you don't," Noonan says. "It's because you couldn't get away with it. It aint account of morals, because you haven't got a moral among you. It aint a question of nerve, because it don't take much nerve. It's because the only thing you smart lads could break into is the penitentiary, and the chances are if you tried a stick-up, some harness bull would grab you with your hand in the sucker's kick."

"You guys are so wise," says Noonan, "when it comes to telling the other fellow how to do his job. You're like these dramatic critics on your papers who will pan Shakespeare himself, but who couldn't write a play if they was to swing for it."

Sload gets up on his feet, at this.

"Aw, let him talk," says Larkin. "He's only a copper."

"Nobody's going to call me a dramatic critic and get away with it," says Sload; and he says to Noonan: "If I had a gun on me, I'd step out of here right now and turn a trick your flatfoot cops wouldn't know about until they read it in the papers."

"Talk is cheap," says Noonan.

"If it wasn't," says Sload, "you'd have shut up years ago."

"I'm glad you put it that way," says Noonan. "Here's your gun."

And with that he reaches under his coat, pulls out his service revolver and puts it on the table handy for Sload.

"Hop to it, Jesse James!" he says.

JUST then the desk-sergeant steps into the squad-room.

"Bring those rods we picked up in last night's raid, Sergeant," says Noonan. When the Sergeant goes out for the guns, Noonan pretends he's surprised to find Sload still in the place.

"Aint you gone yet?" he says. "I thought you just couldn't wait to start your career of crime."

"You think I won't?" says Sload.

"I'm so dead sure of it," says Noonan, "that I'll sweeten up the play for you. Tell me what I'll do. I'll give you King's-X. You know? Like kids playing a game, and when you got King's-X, you can't be it." I'll give you King's-X, and if you get pinched or in any kind of jam, I'll see to it that you aint thrown in the can."

"You're faded," says Sload, and he picks up Noonan's revolver just as the Sergeant comes back with a double handful of assorted guns.

"How about you, wise guy?" says Noonan to Larkin. "Want any part of it?"

"I'll take the same," says Larkin.

"Give me a gat."



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Up to this time I still think it's all a lot of mullarkey, and they won't go through with such a noodly idea. I figure Noonan has the same hunch. But now it's too late for them to back down.

"Anybody else?" says Noonan.

I didn't declare myself in. I never liked practical jokes. Besides, I hadn't been in on the debate. Neither had this Denver fellow Tover. He's just been listening, and now and then smiling in that way he had. He isn't even drinking, like I said. But just as those two amateur crooks are wondering what's the next move, Tover speaks up, very quiet:

"If you won't think I'm intruding—"

"Help yourself," says Noonan.

"Anything goes?" says Tover.

"Anything," says Noonan.

"And I get King's-X?" says Tover.

"You got it," says Noonan.

Tover takes a gun from the Sergeant, clicks it open to see it is loaded and tucks it in his pocket. He pulls the checkered cap down over his eyes.

"So long, fellows," he says. Then he smiles that smile of his, and goes out.

I still think Sload and Larkin are ready to call the whole thing off. But what can they do after this guy from Denver, practically a stranger, makes the break?

"Let's get going," says Sload; and to Noonan: "We'll be back in an hour."

"And meanwhile," says Larkin, "we'll make last week's crime-wave look like a mere ripple."

With that, they're on their way. I can see that Noonan is worried.

"The chances are, at that," he says, "they'll all screw home and try to laugh it off when they show up tomorrow."

But he knows better. So do I. Noonan is just trying to square his own conscience. He jumps when the Sergeant's phone rings in the other room. It isn't a call about our guys, though. Just a patrolman reporting a disturbance in one of the dame-joints in the district.

WE start to get action about fifteen minutes later. A pale indignant citizen blows into the station to report he's been held up within two blocks of the place. He's stuttering, but he gets out that he thinks the stick-up is a lunatic.

"Screwie'n a bedbug," says the citizen. "He hands me back my bank-roll, which isn't so light, and all he takes off me is my lodge-button, which set me back only one-buck-fifty when new, and a dollar watch."

"What's more," says the citizen, "he tells me to come here and report that Jesse James, the lone wolf, is on the war-path, and also to tell you King's-X. I know he aint Jesse James, because Jesse James is dead; but I don't get that King's-X. Screwie, aint he?"

He gives us a description of the stick-up, and we know it's Sload.

"He's Daffy Dan," Noonan tells the citizen, "and he's a harmless crackpot. Must have his little nutty joke. We'll pick him up in no time. Drop in tomorrow afternoon, and we'll have your watch and lodge-button for you. Run along, now, like a good fellow."

And the citizen does.

"It looks to me," I says to Noonan, "like so far, the boys win their bet."

"Wait'll we hear from them other two bright lights," says Noonan.

We don't. Not for a while, anyway. There's just the regular station calls, and a buzz or two on the fire-box. It is very quiet, and we both wish it isn't, or that it'd keep on that way.

THEN the phone rings, and we see the Sergeant's excited, answering. Noonan grabs the phone away from him. It's a report that a masked robber has held up an all-night restaurant run by the Markoupolis brothers. It's practically around the corner, and we guess it must be Larkin. Not only from the description which Tom Markoupolis himself yells over the phone, but also from the fact the robber stole a framed picture, done in colors, of the King and Queen of Greece.

Tom doesn't care so much about the robber cleaning the cash register—which is funny, for a Markoupolis. But he's plenty bitter about the picture. Noonan has a time quieting him down and swearing to get the picture back.

Just as he hangs up the receiver, Larkin comes into the station. He's got the picture under his arm, and a patrolman's got him by the collar.

"King's-X," says Larkin. "I got a bum break."

"Caught red-handed," says the patrolman. "I seen him running down the street, with this hand-painted oil painting under his arm and a mask on, and I says to myself: 'This looks pretty suspicious—'"

"That's deduction," says Larkin. "That's clever police work."

"Don't holler," says Noonan. "I told you, you couldn't get away with it."

"He wouldn't have seen me," says Larkin, "if he'd been on his regular beat. He was just coming out of Large Annie's back room—"

Noonan looks at the patrolman, trying to look very tough. But by this time the patrolman knows there's something funny about the whole business. So he just grins and says: "King's-X."

Noonan lets it go at that, and sends him back to the Markoupolis place with the picture.

No sooner has the patrolman left, when Sload breezes in. He's very much in favor of himself, and he turns over Noonan's gun, the dollar watch and the lodge-button.

"You wouldn't call it grand larceny," says Noonan.

"It aint the money," says Sload. "It's the principle of the thing."

And then there's a whole lot of talk about the way things turned out, Sload bragging about how he made good, and Larkin beefing about his bad luck. Noonan is so glad those two wild-eyed mugs are back without nothing worse happening, that he takes the ribbing they give him.

"Anyway," says Noonan, "the score is no worse than even."

"Wait'll Tover comes back," says Sload.

"He's overdue now," says Noonan.

"The hour's up."

"Tover didn't say anything about being back in an hour," says Larkin.

Tover doesn't come back. We chat awhile, but the Calvary-and-Graceland bottle's been empty a long while. Sparrows are starting to chirp around in the street, and the sky is getting light. When we hear the Dutchman opening up across

the alley, we decide not to wait any longer for Tover.

We all drop into the Dutchman's for a good-night drink. We have three or four. By this time the sun is out, and honest citizens are dropping in for a morning nip on the way to work. We decide to call it a day. But just as we're leaving the Dutchman's, the Sergeant comes galloping across the alley.

"Business is picking up, boys," he says, and he reports to Noonan: "A homicide case. Can you beat it? And me just getting ready to knock off work."

"That's tough," says Noonan. "I'll speak to the assassin about it. Meanwhile, would you mind hinting where it was and how and who?"

The Sergeant tells him. It's a shooting. Some dame in a second-rate flat on the edge of the district. Noonan sighs. He's had a tough night, the Lieutenant has.

"Come along, journalists," he says.

"It's too late for my sheet," says Sload.

"Leave it for the afternoon rags," says Larkin.

"Aw, come on," says Noonan. "Maybe it'll turn out a nice crime-wave."

AT first it looks like he'll have to go alone. Then the patrol wagon rolls down the alley and stops alongside the Dutchman's. It always used to do that to pick up passengers. It was very handy. We have another quick one and go with the Lieutenant.

"But I'm only going along for the ride," says Larkin.

It doesn't take us any time to get there. The day hasn't started to warm up, and the horses are feeling good. They just frisk along, with the driver tapping the gong at every crossing. We pull up in front of this apartment, and recognize it as a joint that doesn't have any too good a reputation. There's a harness bull on duty downstairs.

"We left everything like we found it," he says to Noonan. "It must've come off during the night, but they only found her a little while ago when some neighbor sees the door of her flat open and wonders why. He steps in and finds her."

"Who is she?" says Noonan.

"Nobody knows," says the harness bull.

"She only come here a couple weeks ago," "Living alone?" says Noonan.

"There was a guy," says the harness bull. "I think she was living with him, kind of."

We go up to the second floor, where another harness bull is guarding the flat. Noonan posts him outside, and we go in. She's lying on the floor of the bedroom. I've just got time to notice that she must've been very good-looking, and that she's a red-head, when I hear Sload swear.

"She's the dame I saw with Tover," he whispers to me.

About the same time Larkin, who is nosing around, finds a cap under the bed. There is only one checkered cap like that. We just look at each other. Before we can say anything, Noonan lets a grunt out of him, and we see him staring at a mirror over the dresser. Somebody has taken a piece of soap and written across the mirror like kids do on windows on Halloween. Somebody has written:

King's-X.

Noonan looks at us, and we look back. Finally, he says:

"If you hoys don't mind—" And with that he takes a towel off the dresser and erases the soap. Nobody says a word for a long time, and then Slood pipes up.

"I guess you lose, Noonan," he says. Like I said: Tover never came back. His name wasn't Tover, either. And the girl wasn't a society swell or an actress. She was a girl out of a house back there in Denver, and he took her away to reform her. That happens, you know. Not that it often works out. I guess it didn't with her.

Oh, sure, Noonan tried to find him. We didn't play the case up in the papers, naturally. But the police sent word all over the country. Once we heard that a fellow answering his description showed up in a place called Alamogordo in New Mexico. That's a name, isn't it? He got away, though, before the local police could check up. Later we heard he got across the line into old Mexico, and was killed in a revolution down there. But you know how stories get started. Funny, wasn't it, kind of? Too bad, too. He was a darn' good newspaper man.

THEN CAME THE LEGIONS

(Continued from page 39)

"You're a trump, Cap," he said. "Glad to be of service, Harry."

The officer accepted the sword-belt as the older man relinquished it, but he seemed unwilling to buckle it on.

"Cap," he said, "it's hard lines, drilling, when you don't know how. Our own captain is— Cap, I wish they'd elected you captain of the Guards. Anyway, will you come to drill tonight and help me some more with the company?"

A small boy in a ragged shirt scampered forward to grasp Cap's hand.

"Hello, Buck," Cap greeted him. But he kept looking at the youthful lieutenant.

Buck chirped: "Pa, Ma says she's tired, and wants to have supper early. Says for you to hustle up."

"Very well, sonny." The bearded man was glad, even after this military triumph, that he didn't have to go back and face his brothers, Simpson and Orvil.

He told the officer: "You can count on me. I'll be glad to help in any way I can. You see, I was trained at the expense of the National Government. And in this emergency which faces—"

"You'll be a lot of help!" The young militiaman raced away to take charge of his hungry squads.

Trudging behind Buck as they climbed steep steps toward their little brick house on the north hill, Cap played with the idea. He imagined himself fashioning the Jo Davie's Guards into a veritable Old Guard. Yes, he should write to the War Department. It was human decency for him to do so. And he need not mention Fort Humholdt, the whisky-harrel, and the resigned commission.

He began to build a letter in his mind: "I have the honor to tender my services. . . . In view of my present age and length of service, I feel myself competent to command a regiment, if the President in his judgment should see fit to intrust one to me. . . . I am, very respectfully, your obedient servant, U. S. Grant."



*Any good
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including Tek, of course, can clean
the outside surfaces of your teeth

...but *inside*
is where you need

Tek

• An old story to your dentist's mirror. Tartar *behind* your front teeth where old-fashioned brushes fail to clean because they don't fit. Change to Tek. Cleans *inside* surfaces with outside ease and efficiency. Yet costs no more than a "one-way" brush. Remember—Tek Jr. for the children.

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Ely Culbertson's 1935

Contract **Bridge** Contest

ONCE more, following the precedent established by **REDBOOK MAGAZINE**

several years ago, the greatest living authority on bridge will conduct and supervise a contest in which every one of our readers can participate. So many new leads, bids and methods of play were introduced by Mr. Culbertson in the past six months, that no bridge-player can consider himself or herself up-to-date without making their acquaintance. Whether you enter Ely Culbertson's 1935 contest or not, you will be sure to improve your game considerably by reading Mr. Culbertson's page in each of the coming issues of **REDBOOK**.

OVER TWO THOUSAND PRIZES

SOUP, SOUP, BEAUTIFUL SOUP

(Continued from page 33)

neither the historians nor the pre-historians say. But that moment marked the beginning of civilization; it was the moment when man ceased to be entirely a carnivorous beast and began to be an omnivorous creature. Flavor and aroma began to matter as well as bulk. It is only in various precious-precious periods that flavor and aroma have predominated, and never amongst the vast bulk of humanity.

There is no form of cooking calculated to get the ultimate, last lingering atom of nourishment out of food so well as Soup. The interpenetration of the essential elements is complete; and a really good soup is not a matter which may be improvised. It takes time, care and thought; infinite patience and foresighted planning. This is an old, veteran soup-maker who is talking to you now, and not any mere random highbrow theorist. It begins with the selection of the proper materials at the butcher-shop and the grocery-store, and a complete mental picture of the composite whole to be achieved.

But if you do it at home, it is not a particularly inexpensive sort of food. It is cheaper to buy the ready-made product of the gentlemen who buy the ingredients in great bulk. And candor compels the statement that, as well as I like my own soup, I can't do as well as they can.

A really well-balanced meal necessarily includes Soup. The more highly civilized and stable societies have kept a firm hold upon this axiom. I have been given to understand that while certain sleazy ultra-modern circles neglect it, or go in for Soup that is not really Soup but only the odor and suggestion of Soup, the real article is served in regal society, in England.

They probably eat it without any noise, too. I have listened in over the radio to a lot of swell feeds and banquets in this country, and have often been puzzled as to whether some of the noises I have heard were static, or whether I heard people eating Soup. Television will be a great boon to me when it gets a gadget in every home. Then I can turn to the right nick on the radio dial, and see prominent people all over the country eating their soup, and reassure myself about the static.

FRANCE is one of the supreme soup-making countries; and it is not by accident that the French are among the keenest thinkers which the world has produced, the most intellectual people. In the matter of Soup, the French can do more with less than a lesser people can with more. Give a French cook a bone and a hank of hare, and he will turn you out a *potage* that smells and tastes divinely.

And yet I am afraid that the current tendency on the part of some persons to skimp on the ingredients owes its origin to the French school; a lot of persons have carried it to an extreme. Laurence Sterne noticed this tendency in French cookery more than a hundred years ago.

"A dinner should end with Crème de Menthe"

Says IRENE PURCELL



The blonde, piquante actress, Irene Purcell, who shuttles between Broadway and Hollywood, feels that a dinner without Crème de Menthe is an unfinished dinner. "It's so cool and green," she says,

"it has such a fresh, clean taste." We are very sympathetic to this ourselves, because Cusenier happens to be the original Crème de Menthe and we're frankly proud of it. People tell us it is exceptionally good.

"A dinner should end with Cognac Brandy"

Says FRANK CASE



Still, Mr. Case's opinion is not something to toss over your left shoulder, because as head man at the Algonquin Hotel he has been host to the stage and its critics for many years. A sound Cognac brandy is an elegant liqueur—and this is especially true of Cusenier Cognac because it is *fifteen* years old (although it sells for no more than many only *five*). It really deserves balloon glasses.



For that matter, a dinner should end with Apricot, or Triple Sec or Orange Curacao or Blackberry, or any one of the 33 other Cusenier Liqueurs—let your palate be your guide. You notice we specify Cusenier. We admit to being prejudiced. Yet Cusenier liqueurs must be exceedingly good because MORE PEOPLE BUY THEM THAN ANY OTHER BRAND IN THE WORLD.



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CUSENIER

La Gde Distillerie E. Cusenier Fils Aîné et Cie, Paris

Imported and Guaranteed by W. A. TAYLOR & CO., N.Y.

to feed my pastoral beauties while they made ninety dollars' worth of butter!

A few months later I heard of a man who wanted some cows. I rode all day and night to meet this potential customer. He made a down payment of fifty dollars. That was the last I ever saw of the man, the cows or the rest of the money.

"Tillie's Nightmare" was another *Cinderella* story, but with a difference. Poor Tillie served as a drudge in her mother's boarding-house while her beautiful sister Maude basked idly in the sunshine of her own and her mother's approval. But unlike the *Cinderella* of story-book fame, Tillie only dreamed her fine escape from drudgery. In the final scene we leave her just where we found her in the first act.

WHEN "Tillie" closed after a phenomenal five-year run, I decided to put on a show of my own. I called the piece "Marie Dressler's Merry Gamboh." With the exception of the *merry*, it was well-named. I put a mint of money into the production, and it turned out to be a first-rate flop in New York. Later, however, I took it to San Francisco, where it enjoyed a nice run. Of course I never made back half of what I had lost. But I spent no time crying over spilt milk. I don't mind going to the poorhouse once, but I refuse to go there every day in anticipation.

When we stored my "Merry Gamboh," I found myself verging on a nervous breakdown. My doctor ordered me to Los Angeles to rest and bask in the sunshine.

It was while here that one of the most thrilling episodes of my life had its beginning. One afternoon, in company with my nurse, I dropped into a neighborhood picture-house. As we passed through the lobby, I noticed one of a pair of men staring at me oddly.

"Hurry, let's get inside," I whispered to my companion. "That's a Broadway exile who's stranded and wants to bum his fare back to New York. He's trying to get up his nerve to speak to me."

Sure enough, when the performance was over, we found the two men waiting outside the theater door. The one I had first noticed approached me with a sort of desperate diffidence.

"Miss Dressler," he said, jerking his head in the direction of his wild-eyed companion, "we'd like to talk to you a minute."

I told him I'd see him at my hotel, for I was not equal to the ordeal of standing while I listened to a hard-luck story. When they presented themselves in my sitting-room ten minutes later, I discovered that the wild-eyed one was Mack Sennett, and that the spokesman for the pair was Bauman, of Keystone Pictures.

They were so full of themselves that they both talked at once, and at first I could not make heads or tails of what they said. Finally I got what they were driving at. They wanted to make good pictures that would take them into first-rate houses. They thought they could break into first-string theaters if they had my name in the cast.

Of course I did not take pictures too seriously. Nobody did twenty years ago. But I thought it would be fun to fool around with this new thing. I told Sennett and Bauman I would join them

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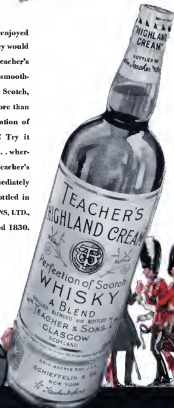
Pepsodent is really different. It works in a different way to give different results. When Pepsodent is so safe, so certain, how can you afford to entrust the care of *your* teeth to "hit or miss" methods or bargain dentifrices? Just try Pepsodent Tooth Paste once. We believe you will want to use Pepsodent regularly twice a day thereafter. And be sure to see your dentist at least twice a year.



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if they made me a satisfactory proposition. The next day the pair returned with their plan all worked out. I was to own half the picture when made. It was to be leased, but never sold. They were to send me a weekly statement.

Nothing could be fairer than that.

At my suggestion, we decided on "Tillie's Punctured Romance" for our first fling.

It was the old *Cinderella* theme again, with plenty of tears behind the laughter. Now for actors. Instantly there leaped into my mind a young chap I had seen in London several years before. I knew that boy had genius. That he would some day be acclaimed a star. I had run across him a few days before in Hollywood. Now I started a great hue and cry:

"Where is Charlie Chaplin? I want Charlie Chaplin!"

Everybody thought I was crazy. Maybe I was, but I knew what I knew. And I knew that Chaplin could act. He was an enormous success in "Tillie." I'm proud to have had a part in giving him his first big chance. To this day I regard him as the prince of comedians. Charlie helped me pick Mabel Normand for an important rôle. Then we set to work. I never worked harder or had more fun in my life. When we finished the picture fourteen weeks later, both Mabel and Charlie cried because it was all over, and I had to go back to New York.

We thought we were good, and we confidently expected others to think so too. But for a while it looked as if our dream of success with the production was as badly punctured as Tillie's romance. In New York I saw the film peddled about for nine long weeks. As fast as it was shown in projection-rooms, it was turned down. Nobody would take a chance on it, and we had just about given up hope, when at last we got a favorable hearing and a showing in a decent theater.

The picture was a tremendous success. Lines blocks long stood to get into the second matinee. Every house that showed the film did a record business. Indeed, eight men have told me that "Tillie's Punctured Romance" built their theaters.

THE moment America plunged into the war, I offered my services to the powers-that-were in Washington. I wanted to go to France as an entertainer, but Uncle Sam wanted me to stay home and peddle Liberty bonds.

Some of my war-time experiences I cannot recall now without tears. Once when I was making a speech, a blue-eyed young marine strode up to the edge of the platform, took a hundred dollars in greenbacks from his pocket, and handed the roll to me.

"For a bond," he said gruffly, and turned on his heel.

"But," I called after him, "where shall I send it?"

His hard young mouth quirked into a smile, he lifted a shoulder, spread his hands in a cynical gesture, "Who knows?" he said and disappeared in the milling crowd.

Another time, a jobless old man with one arm and little English, ran after a moving train in Minnesota to give me sixty-six dollars, which was all he had in the world. "My boy," he shouted, "be bane Over There!"

Beginning with Cleveland, I have met and talked with seven Presidents and dined with five. I have no vivid impression of my meeting with Mr. Cleveland nor with his successor McKinley. But I recall as plainly as if it were yesterday my introduction to Theodore Roosevelt. Of all the personalities I have encountered in public or private life, his was the most vigorous and magnetic.

ALONG with a dozen others, I was awaiting the President in the ante-room adjoining his office. Suddenly the door swung open, and Mr. Roosevelt strode in. I was farthest away from the door. His back was turned to me as he hurried from person to person, wringing each by the hand and exclaiming heartily: "Dee-lighted! Dee-lighted!"

I couldn't take my eyes off his strong neck as it inclined in greeting in his rapid journey around the semicircle—his movements were so quick, sure and decisive. And yet he was the soul of cordiality. I watched him with curiosity and amazement. At last he got to me.

"Well, well, Miss Dressler," he snapped, his teeth showing in that famous smile of his, "now that we meet, what do you think of me?"

I answered truthfully: "I think you have the strongest-looking neck I ever saw!"

He roared with laughter. . . .

President Taft endeared himself to me for two reasons: First, for his deep rumbling chuckle, which seemed to start in a subterranean cavern and work itself gradually to the surface; and second, for his courage in making a joke of his size. He used often, I am told, to buy a pair of seats for himself when he was attending an entertainment. I wonder if he ever reached the theater to find his two seats on different sides of the aisle!

I found Woodrow Wilson somewhat unapproachable, but his wife and charming daughters always made up for his lack of warmth.

Warren Harding, on the contrary, was the complete antithesis of Wilson. Pleasant speeches came easily to him—too easily, perhaps. His desire to please was no doubt his greatest weakness, both as President and as man. Yet nobody can deny his charm. When his secretary started to present me, Mr. Harding waved aside the formal introduction.

"You don't have to tell me who Marie Dressler is," he smiled. "I've seen her in everything she ever did."

MY long friendship with Franklin Roosevelt began when he was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, and we were both stamping the country in the Liberty Loan drive. Those were the days before his tragic illness. He was a bright young man, charming and able. But he was not the selfless man he is today.

Long years flat on his back gave him time to read and think, time to grow mentally and spiritually. Many men would have emerged from such an experience crippled in soul, embittered to find life interrupted so cruelly at high tide. Not so Franklin Roosevelt. In my poor opinion, it was that terrible illness that made him President of the United States—that, and the remarkable woman who is his wife.

Early in his convalescence, Mrs. Roose-

"You Don't Have to be Rich to RETIRE AT 55 ON \$200 A MONTH"



"I'LL DRAW an income of \$200 a month for the rest of my life, as soon as I'm 55," said a certain man who was discussing his plans for the future.

"How can you do it on your salary?" asked his friend.

"Easy," said the first man. "I'm buying a Retirement Income on the installment plan. My income of \$200 a month begins when I'm 55, and it's guaranteed for life. No depression can stop it."

"What's more, if I should drop out of the picture before my retirement age, my wife would get a regular monthly income for the rest of her life."

"That sounds good," said the other, "but what if you're totally disabled, and can't make your payments?"

"I don't have to worry about that either. If, before I reach 55, serious illness or accident stops my earning power for six months, then—so long thereafter as I remain disabled—I don't have to pay any premiums that fall due, and I'll get a Disability income besides."

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how old you are, when you want to retire, and the size of the income you will want.

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Straight as a string



volt went to the hospital where he was being treated.

"Franklin," she said, "can you move your leg?"

"No, Eleanor."

"Can you move your foot?"

"No, Eleanor."

"Can you move a toe?"

The big man on the bed shook his head. "Oh, yes, you can, Franklin. You can wiggle a toe if you try hard enough."

And she stood there by his side until he moved a toe. A few weeks later, he could move all his toes. Then the foot of the stricken leg. And so on, inch by inch, until he could walk again. . . .

Last fall I spent a week-end at the White House. Franklin and Eleanor welcomed me with that simple friendliness which is their nature. The President is human; he has made some mistakes; no doubt he will make others. But there is one thing of which I am as certain as I am certain that God is Love. It is this: Franklin Roosevelt is ruled by one thought and one prayer—to lead the country wisely and safely out of what has been a hideous mess.

WHEN I canceled my bookings to work for Uncle Sam, I was getting twenty-five hundred a week in vaudeville. A pretty penny! I had saved a little, and I was proud to be able to defray my own expenses in the campaign. When my bank-account gave out, I hurried East and sold the farm in Vermont which I had bought some time before. The Armistice found me broke, except for a few Liberty bonds. But I was undismayed.

The first hint of trouble ahead came when my agent returned from a round of the booking-offices with a long face. "Miss Dressler," he said apologetically, "they say you have been out of the running for several years. That you have probably—er—deteriorated."

"All right," I said. "Go back and ask 'em how much I have deteriorated."

"They say they'll give you fifteen hundred dollars a week," he said hesitantly. "Tell 'em we'll take it," I said.

I played the Palace three weeks, and the audiences were as enthusiastic as ever. But the producers and the bookies had got an idea in their heads: The post-war world, they said solemnly, wanted youth and beauty and love; they wanted no homely old women to clutter up the scene.

I was prepared to point out that I had never been pretty, and that my great success in "Tillie's Nightmare" had come when I was thirty-eight. But I never got a chance. As I went in the front door of offices, managers—men who had begged for the privilege of paying me thousands of dollars a week—went out the back door, or down the fire-escape.

My friends all tried to help me. Nella Webb, then an internationally known dancer, now a well-known astrologer, haunted the offices of more producers. She insisted that I was the female Emil Jannings. That I could do first-rate character work, if given a chance. The picture people didn't even bother to conceal their amusement.

Eventually, Nella did succeed in hypnotizing a producer into saying he would put on "Tillie's Nightmare" in the movies. We were so thrilled when we got the good news that I rushed out and bought two

lengths of cloth, came home and, squatting down on my heels, proceeded to cut out and make us a frock apiece before dark. That night we celebrated by going to the Ritz for dinner.

It's just as well that we got in our celebration early. A few days later our young man was offered a job in England with a fifty-thousand-dollar salary appended. He didn't have time to say good-bye, but he did cable us his whereabouts and his good-luck wishes.

And that was that!

SEVEN years passed with practically no engagement of a professional nature.

By this time, I was living from hand to mouth, on a week's engagement here, an evening's work there. I had a few securities left. If I sold the last of these, I should have enough to get to Paris and establish myself there in a modest way.

I had long dreamed of opening a hotel in Paris in my old age—a hotel for Americans, who can never get water hot enough for the scalding baths they love; a hotel for Americans, who would pass up duck at the Tour d'Argent for Maryland fried chicken and waffles. Above all, a place where coffee is coffee and not ground chicory! Yes, that would be the thing. A hostelry for my fellow-countrymen who want their Paris served up with all the comforts of home. I sold my bonds.

Then one morning I slipped out and bought my passage. This was early in January, 1927.

At this time I was sharing my apartment with Nella Webb. Nella is a small dark animated person with the grace of a humming-bird and the persistence of a bull pup. All her life Nella had been fascinated by astrology. During her tours of Europe, she had studied under the masters over there. Now she had definitely forsaken the stage and was giving her whole time to research and computations that made my head ache.

In spite of the bleak years through which I had passed since the War, Nella stubbornly insisted that I had a great future ahead of me—a future, when it looked as if I hadn't even a present! She brushed aside my good-natured scoffing. For months she had been poring over her musty tomes; making complicated astrological charts; chasing the stars all over the heavens. Daily she assured me that my big hour was about to strike. Only that morning, she had told me excitedly that I hadn't much longer to wait.

But I had taken fate into my own hands. There was a scene when I got home and broke the news to Nella. I showed her my ticket.

Then Nella got mad. And when she is mad, she is a formidable little bull pup—no humming-bird at all. She called up my old friend Jimmy Forbes, the playwright. "Jimmy," she wailed, "come over here. Marie is about to make a fool of herself."

Jimmy came on the run. He brought along Helena Dayton and Louise Barrett. They sat around in a solemn ring and listened while Nella read off my chart, with all those impossible predictions of future grandeur. I don't think any of them except Nella had any particular

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faith in astrology, but they felt sort of responsible for me. They didn't want me to run off half-cocked, as they put it, to Paris.

"She'll lend her last sou to some tramp who wants to come home," snorted Jimmy.

"Hotel-keeper, my eye!" groaned Nella. The girls. And one of them added: "She'll never collect a bill!"

They outdid each other in poking fun at me. I agreed to wait until the end of January.

"And not a day longer," I told Nella. "You'd better get your stars on the job!"

"You won't have to wait that long," said Nella. "You'll get one of the most important offers of your life on January 17th."

And on the afternoon of January 17th, something happened. I got a telephone-call from Allan Dwan, one of Hollywood's topnotch directors. He wanted me to play a small part in an Olive Borden picture he planned to screen in Florida. I was not at all keen about it, but I gave in, though with poor grace.

In Florida, it was just as I expected. A little mite of a part. I arrived on Tuesday morning. By Wednesday night, my scenes had been shot. I got on the train and came back home to gibe at Nella, "I told you so!"

But the truth was, I had got a thrill out of that little rôle. It had been a long time since I had faced a camera. I liked the feel of it. I always had. It made me homesick for the old days of "Tillie's Punctured Romance," when Charlie Chaplin and Mabel Normand and I had had so much fun fourteen years before.

Nella was triumphant. "It's just the beginning," she crowed.

"Humph!" said I. But she wouldn't let me buy another ticket to Paris. For two months we sat in the apartment and twiddled our thumbs. Nella refused to step out of reach of the telephone. She went into huddles with her logarithms and Jupiter who, she said, was cutting up didoes in my favor.

THEN, when I had given up all hope, we got another phone-call—a long-distance one from Hollywood, in the middle of the night. The voice at the other end of the wire was a feminine one—a voice that I had known for years, the voice of Frances Marion, the boss scenario-writer of the picture world. It sang across three thousand miles of wire. "Pick up your pie box," it said, "and come to Hollywood. I need you!"

Nella danced a jig in her nightdress. She was triumphant.

"Your troubles are over," said Jimmy and Helena and Louise the next day.

But my troubles weren't over. They were just beginning. On a magnificent, a truly Olympian scale!

Few women have lived so rich, so varied or so tumultuous a life as Marie Dressler. And the episodes described in the next installment of her story (in our forthcoming December issue) again are of the deepest interest.

A FEW FOOLISH ONES

(Continued from page 19)

"Well, I might."

Gus was not much for dancing, but he had scoured sand off the flat rocks of Mount Assahenbegue now and again at Fourth of July picnics. He remembered these occasions in brief triumph.

A lantern swinging ahead, carried by another also bound to the meeting, glinted and squeaked. Gus followed it up the little path to the church steps, his footsteps falling heavily among the pink blossoms and burning leaves of smartweed.

"RISE to nominate Asa Cheney moderator of this meetin'."

"Second the motion."

"All them in favor of Asa Cheney servin' as moderator of this meetin'—"

"Aye."

"Them opposed? . . . Brothers and sisters, your motion is carried. Brother Cheney will serve as moderator of this meetin', and may the Lord bless him in this office."

Elder James Gray closed the big Bible over which he had bent to make his opening prayer, and laid it on a shelf inside the pulpit. His eyes, full and blue like Sarey's, but dull with age, dwelt somberly on the stout and smiling Asa as they met on the platform steps.

"For His Name's sake, Brother Cheney."

"Amen, Elder. Amen to that."

The meeting-house would seat a congregation of a hundred, and was nearly full. Above the straight backs of the pine pews reared the uneven rows of heads, bare on one side of the room, honneted on the other.

Mindwell Gray and her daughters occupied the front pew of the women's side, and Lovice Joy and Moses Dockham's wife and daughter with them, placed there by the evangelist to lead the singing. Hannah Bragdon and her daughters might sit where they liked, for there was no music in the Bragdon family; but Leteschy, the oldest, must be near enough the platform to hear distinctly, for she was clerk *pro tem*, writing in a notebook with mottled red-and-black covers what took place. It was likely to be a Bragdon for writing or figuring. The Grays and Dockhams could sing, the Blaines fiddle and dance and tell yarns; but a Bragdon must survey the road and superintend the school and keep whatever record was kept of business transactions. It was the way, a good way, of operating the community: to place each one where he was of most use, and give him both the responsibility and the rewards fitted to his position.

"The first matter of business to come before this meetin' is the lecture to membership in this Society of them as took the first step in Elder Johnson's meetin's two weeks back," said Asa. "These is the names: Catherine Shorey, Enoch Blaine—"

"God bless 'em."

"Yea. Praise His Name."

"Leteschy, Kate and Hattie Bragdon—"

"Amen!"

"Betsy and Lovice Joy, Roxanna and Sarey Gray—"

"His handmaidens. Yea, keep the oil in the lamps, for the bridegroom cometh!"



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traveled from one face to another. "I say, my brothers and sisters, it would be a matter for wonder if we could sit so long in the House of our Father and then go away from it with never a word spoke in praise of Him. We come here and talk of what will be done, and who shall have the doing of it—but nothing of faith, nothing of fear of Him who casts the thunderbolts, nothing of love for our Lord Jesus Christ."

THE Elder's voice crept upward and outward from its low beginning. His eyes seared everything they touched, the men and women whose thoughts had wandered, the midwife who had slept, the fooling boys, the drowsy children.

"Don't it come to your mind that it is many hours till we get together here for our Sunday meeting? Don't it grip you for your marrow what it will be for you if in that time it comes your turn to stand before your Maker? You draw the picture for yourself. There you are before your Lord, and St. Peter waiting. What can you say? When did you last declare Him? Them as are not for Him are ag'in Him. That was what He said. Have you denied Him? Are you denying Him tonight? Oh, my brothers and sisters, here is your opportunity. What has He done for you? What does He mean to you? Will you declare the Lord Jesus Christ?"

No one any longer slept or was sleepy. Though the doors still stood open, night and summer and all the chores of house and barn were suddenly shut out of the crowded room. The light from the lamps did not reach the corners, and Jesus filled the shadows. He could not be touched, but the majesty of Him, the power and terror and heauty of Him stood tall in every pew.

"I will," cried Betsy Joy, springing to her feet. "I will declare Him. He was the One they crucified for us. Oh, blessed Jesus! We have sinned and we have backslid, but He remaineth with us. He is the Great Forgiver! Praise His Name, praise His blessed Name!"

Garbled and old at forty, she dropped on her knees, her face hidden in her bonnet.

"I was the ninety-and-ninth," said Lyman Allen. "He come and got me."

"All that is good cometh from Him," Catherine Shorey said, seventeen years old, with ribbons instead of strings on her bonnet, she who would marry Enoch Blaine at harvest.

"I would speak His Name," said Hannah Bragdon in a monotone, looking at the wall. "There has been times I couldn't 'a' got through alone. He aint forsook me."

Sarey stood, very slender and pale, her voice breaking.

"I aint never known Him until this late," she cried. "It seems a long time I been without Him. Now—I've found Him—I won't never let Him go."

Her father's eyes traveled from her, as she sat down and bowed her smooth head, to Roxanna, who was looking at her hands. Roxanna, it seemed, had still not found Him.

Roxanna was the mote in the Elder's own eye, for she would ever laugh and play, and sometimes was tricky. Sarey gave no one any trouble. Sarey was all



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woman, quick to tears and easily molded,
safe enough under her father's hand. It
was strange what a difference could be in
sisters, one hard and gleaming like an
icicle in the sun, the other soft and sweet
as candy warm from the stove.

"Anyone else?" the Elder asked.
"It's in me to say," declared Mose,
leaping up, "it seems to me we show our-
selves too full of weakness. What use he
we to the Lord but as an army? It's as
soldiers we've signed up, soldiers of the
Lord. Here in this room at Elder John-
son's meetin' we put our names to a
pledge we wouldn't touch no liquor. I
put my name there. You put your name
there, Brother Gray. Many of us has put
our names there, but we aint all. Some
of us is a-holdin' back. Some of us is
a-holdin' back on the Lord.

"Here is our pledge. A handsome pa-
per, aint it? Brother Cheney, I'm a-goin'
to ask you to hang it right up there where
all can see."

Asa took the paper and fastened it with
pins to the wall behind the pulpit. The
letters of the words were clear and plain,
filled in with color, red and blue, and
edged around with gold.

I DO SOLEMNLY PROMISE, WITH THE
HELP OF GOD, TO ABSTAIN FROM
ALL INTOXICATING DRINK, INCLUD-
ING BEER, WINE, AND CIDER.

"A handsome paper, aint it?" Mose
Dockham asked proudly. "My name is
signed to it. I been a heavy drinker in
the past. That aint no news to you folks
here. You seen me settin' in my kitchen
passin' around the mugs of cider from
my pitcher hung up from the cellar.
You seen me on Saturday afternoons
a-comin' home from market with the
whisky in me. But all that is changed
now, brothers and sisters. I have jined
the army of the Lord. Other ones' names
is there also—Brother Gray's, and Mind-
well's and their daughters'; every Brag-
don's name is there, and Betsy Joy's.
But I want to ask ye, is *your* name
there? . . . Is your name there? . . .
If it aint, aint this the time to step up
and write it in? . . . Aint this the time?"

Asa crept down on creaking shoes and
sat by Lyman Allen.

THROUGH the hush, Mindwell Gray's
voice led the others into song.

"The Lord cometh. His day is close
at hand. Sign up for His army. Sing of
your love. Yield not to temptation, for
yielding is sin."

Jesus moved aside to let the boys and
the children out of the pews and up the
aisles to write their names with pencil
in the space allotted, but He was there
when they came back, and stood again
near them, nearer than before. The air
was heavy with the silent sound of the
golden buttons and epaulettes and spurs
on His uniform. When Abraham Ely,
who had been as great a drinker as Ely
Mose Dockham was, made his way up to
sign, Jesus went with him every step,
an arm across Abraham's shoulders.

"Anyone else to sign?" asked Mose.
"Anyone else to sign His praise?"
asked the Elder.

The group had grown steadily more
and more fused; it was no longer an em-
barassment for one to speak out freely
before the rest.

"I've seen Him hold the hands of the
sick and the dyin'—"

"Once in the berry woods He come to
me—"

"All joy is from Him, all rest, and
takin' thought, and goodness—"

"Do His will and He shall be—"

BUT from outside an alien sound was
heating in upon the meeting, familiar
enough at other times along York Road,
but strange and terrible to ears attuned to
the low voice of worship.

"Waiting there at the gates to Heav-
en—"

"I'm old Jeddy Lencscott! I'm old
Jeddy Lencscott!"

"May the Lord watch—"

"—lick anybody—"

"A place to the right hand of the
Lord—"

"I pray I may be worthy—"

"Damn' sneakin' skunks!"

"Thy rod and Thy staff—"

"—old Jeddy Lencscott!"

It was no use. The worshippers lifted
their heads reluctantly, their eyes filmed
from the dimness of the place where they
had been with Jesus; not this place, some
other one; Jesus was not here. This was
the meeting-house on Nubble Point, and
a gang of the Lencscotts, ugly with drink,
were "on the warpath," singing and shout-
ing their way down the road. Nor were
they going past, but turning up the
church path and stumbling over the steps.
"I'll show 'em. Let me in there. I'll
show 'em. I'm old Jeddy Lencscott. I'm
old Jeddy Lencscott, and I can lick any-
body on this road, damn' sneakin' skunks!
I'll show 'em."

Jeddy himself appeared in the door,
with several of his boys in the shadows
at his shoulders. Jeddy was long-bodied
and short-legged, a man of sixty or more,
son of old Tim, who "loved trematous
so." He was bareheaded, his hair hang-
ing over his forehead and down his neck;
barefooted, in shirt-sleeves, his buttons
off and the hide of him showing plain.
He had been crying; his face was streaked,
his shirt-front wet, and his voice still
thick with sobs, also with hiccoughs which
had come out of the earthenware jug
which he carried, as a man might carry a
pig, under his arm. It was no way to
appear in a church, but when did a Lenc-
cott ever know anything?

"So here ye be!" he cried. "So here
ye set, the lot of ye! It aint no matter
to ye if she's dead. Ye'd jest as lieves
we'd be dead. It aint no matter to
ye about a neighbor's girl, what happens
to her, he it? Ye can keep up your sing-
in' and your fun here jest the same. It
aint no matter to ye—hut she's dead!
She's dead, I tell ye! My Ketury's
dead!"

The Elder was standing now. He raised
his hand.

"Jedediah! . . . Jedediah, I see you're
in great trouble. Great trouble. Put
down your jug, and come in, and—let us
pray!"

Jeddy heeded the sound of his name,
but before the Elder finished speaking,
his mind had wandered; he did not hear.

"She was the best one of 'em all," he
was saying gently, "Ketury was. Why,
it wa'n't no time ago she was a-steppin'
of it out to one great rate, there on the
kitchen floor, when I played on my jew's-

harp. I never see no young one like her. She's smart, Ketury is. Why, she can make flowers grow and bloom wherever—abouts she wants 'em. Wa'n't never any other woman t' our house that could handle 'em so. It's just the same, too, with the cutters in the barn. Ketury, she always can go in around 'em. They wouldn't one of our cutters hurt Ketury *no more!* I've known her harness up old Moll, the damndest, meanest-feelin' old rascalion of a horse—"

"Jedediah!" the Elder said again. "Your talk aint fittin' for this place. Hark now. Keturah's dead, you say. Put down your jug and come in, then, and we'll say her a prayer for you."

This time Jeddy heard plain. He did not put down his jug, but he scuffed suddenly farther into the room and stood at the corner of the platform. The pride and tenderness that had filled his face drained out of it.

"Yeah, you're right. You're right. I was forgettin'. My Ketury's dead. She won't plant her flowers nor harness up old Moll hereafter. Nothin' but a young one, she wa'n't. A little racin' young one. And somebody on this road got her. Somebody, like enough, that's settin' here now, a-singin' and a-prayin', he got her. And we, we never said nothin'. We never put up no fight. We aint asked nobody to pay nothin' nor marry nobody. Lenscotts can take care of what's theirs; maybe we aint much, but we don't ask nothin' of nobody. We never put up no fight, and you know it. Ketury got her young one, and we'll take care of it. Nobody needs to worry about Ketury's young one. That'll be looked after right to home. . . ."

"He's an awful takin' little feller, too. He aint higger'n nothin', but them eyes of his is just as bright—"

JEDDY was going gentle again. His sons pressed up against him—Lige and Hamesh, Joel and Ezra, all taller than Jeddy, their faces leaner and harder. They had been drinking too, but not so much as he, only enough to toughen them—as if Lenscotts needed toughening. They stood together.

"That's right we're not lettin' of it drop about the young one," Hamesh said. His voice was young and hoarse. "It would've all been let pass if Ketury had got through. But she haint; she's dead. And somebody here is goin' to pay for it. I don't know who it is, nor I aint a-carin', but somebody here is a-comin' out and git what we got to give him."

"It looked so awful easy," Ezra sneered. "She wa'n't nothin' but a Lenscott. Twa'n't no matter what become of her. Twa'n't as if she'd been a Bragdon or a Dockham or a Gray—"

"Aint no need of so much mouth," said Lige. "One of you come outdoors here, and see what Santa Claus brought you."

The oil in the lamps was burning low. The air of the room lay thick with smoke and fear and threat and the smell of the Lenscotts.

The Elder was not afraid. He stepped out into the aisle, his breathing heavy. Standing with the Lenscotts, he looked taller and thinner than ever, and very old.

"You hoys," he said, "have got yourselves out of hand. You must quiet

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Lige. "Tackle me yourself. Or be ye afraid to?"

"Afraid—" Lige choked.

"Yeus. Afeard—"

Gus' big fist came out and hit the air. Lige, hopping nimbly away from it, turned his own back on the door. His lips tightened and thinned over his teeth. "Afeard?" He skipped up and landed his first blow, on Gus' chest; the dropping of the Bible had jarred the meeting-house no less; Gus' body was like a stone wall overgrown with moss. They moved about, eying each other, Lige mumbling expletives and threats, Gus silent as he would have been at work in his own field. Lige's right to Gus' neck, Lige's left to Gus' ear; all of Gus' blows missing, for he was slow, and as far as anybody knew, had never raised a hand against another man before; but it was plain that if one found Lige, it would lay him out. Gus Bragdon did not play. His fists swung as if he carried an ax; this stump would come out of here, roots and all!

"Damn ye for a—"

THE time came. Gus' fist went plunging up—caught Lige under the jaw. It might have hit his shoulder and his ear, but the time had come, and it caught his jaw. Lige made a deep sound and stumbled, and fell through the doorway onto the steps. Gus stood where he was.

The room was as still as if no one were in it.

"Gus!" Sarey whispered. "Gus—you've killed him."

Gus turned a look on her. He said: "I haint neither. You keep out of this."

Then, clearing his throat, he said to Hamesh:

"You better draw up some water and throw on him. He's had bigger thumps than that and come around." A smile stirred his eyes. "I sha'n't never take on no Lenscotts, Ham, unless they be drunk. You'd be the end of me, amongst ye."

Hamesh and Ezra stood uncertainly. Nothing had gone as had been planned. Lige was knocked cold; Jeddy was drunk; and Joel was a fool. It became their place to take the next step, but the direction was not plain. Hamesh looked at Gus and felt no hate; these two had hunted cattle together in the woods, night after night, and once been lost for two days in an alder swamp, sleeping among the ferns and eating huckleberries. Ham left Gus out of it, and made his threat to the others in the room.

"Well, 'taint the end of it, this haint," he said. "And some of ye's goin' to pay yet. Ye may figger because she'll be into the ground before ye have another one of your singin'-and-prayin' bouts, it'll all blow over. But Lenscotts don't forget so easy. They don't forget so easy, I tell ye! We'll keep in mind for a good while that she's a-layin' up there in the woods somewheres in a hole we dug for her—"s if she was a—"s if she wasn't nothin' but a cutter out of the barn—"

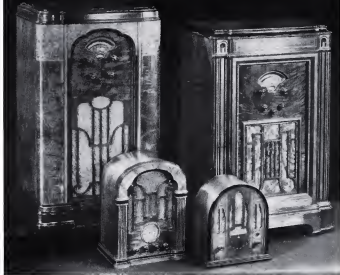
Jeddy, far past noticing fire, fight or talk, sat rocking his jug and shedding tears on it, holding and stroking it as if it were a baby, a girl-baby in a blanket Aunt Let Ely had "twitched up." He sang crooningly:

"There come to my wi-inder,
One mornin' in spring,
A wee-et little ro-obin—"

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Gus stopped Ham from going blindly after his brothers.

"You hold on, Ham," Gus said. "I got suthin' to say here. You hold on." He looked at Asa, seated in the Allen pew.

"Mr. Chairman, I make a motion a grave be dug here in the meetin'-house graveyard for Keturah Lencscott."

The last words dinned in Jeddy's ears. He went forward, tears running down his face.

He said: "What is it ye say, thar? The graveyard? Would they let her lay in the graveyard? Aint no Lencscott ever laid—all nice—"

Ham had raised his head. His eyes were dark and desperate, hanging on what would happen next.

ELDER GRAY rose ominously.

"The unredeemed, even, see—where your eyes are blind, Brother Bragdon," he said. "No society can pass such a motion. The churchyard is the Lord's, not ours, and only them as have believed in Him can have the comfort of it. Only them as have kept His commandments and acknowledged Him. You are beside yourself, Brother Bragdon, to speak such words for Him to hear."

Gus stood staring at the wall, waiting for the Elder to be done. It was plain the words made no impression on him. His mind saw only the one way. Keturah Lencscott, the little will one with black hair stringing, lay dead in childhood; her father had drunk himself weak, and her brothers had drunk themselves ugly. No body would put it past the Lencscotts to burn down a church or a set of buildings, poison heifers turned out to commons, or let their dogs loose on sheep, if they got started on a rampage. There had to be a way of getting around such ones. And Keturah, sixteen years old, lying still and cold, could do no harm in any place.

"Haint nothin' in my Bible," Gus said finally, "says who can get hurried in a churchyard, and who can't."

The Elder, leaning farther forward, had more talk-over about commandments and church-members, about sin and shame and the wages of sin. Moses Dockham hopped up, squealing and squeaking about God and John and Luke and Judas Iscariot and other people Gus doubted that he knew; Moses was as drunk now with religion as he had ever been with ale; his mouth always went like a mill clapper. Some of the womenfolk took their chance too, to let their tongues wag. Gus opened his own mouth and closed it three times. When he did speak, it was into a silence.

He said: "Ye don't talk reasonable. Aint none of ye doin' nothin' but rant and rave. Aint no reason why Keturah Lencscott shouldn't get hurried here. I made it into a motion."

"Such a motion, Brother Bragdon," warned the Elder, "will never be passed by this—"

HERE Gus interrupted. He had heard enough. His ears rang as if he had worked at stone-blasting and cutting all day.

"If ye can't pass it," he said, "ye can leave it lay." He turned and went with Ham to the door. "Ye can bury on my place if ye see fit," he told him. "I got a spot picked out, high and dry, the heat

of any ground they've got here for hurryin'. I'll have a fence around it, too, before snow flies. Ye can put her there if ye're a mind to."

Bragdons were not hard if touched in the right places. They would hunt longer than anyone else for a man lost in the woods, and stay up nights to see after a creature ailing in the barn, making no hullabaloo, wasting no pats or soft words, but tramping or dosing, dragging, ponds or blanketing, hour after hour, and hour after hour. They made bull calves into steers, and ram lambs into wethers, for it was necessary; but they did not heat their horses nor drive unshod cattle over ice to drink. They sheared their sheep but did not bring the blood; the runt of a Bragdon litter was never left for the sow to lie on, and creatures found lingering in traps in the woods Bragdons either let go or killed. They made no talk of pity; but as the demands came, Bragdons did these things.

"Brother Bragdon—"

"Ye don't talk reasonable," Gus said, facing in once more. "Ye don't act with no judgment. Church aint what I thought it was. I'm better off to stay to home and tell my Bible to myself. Aint no use in me lingerin' here. I don't see with ye no way."

"The changes needed in your heart and soul," said the Elder, "aint been worked yet, Augustus Bragdon. I'll be praying the Lord to make you into a humbler man."

"I'll just get my hat," said Gus.

He tramped up to his father's pew, and as he started down again, they rose with set faces, one after another, his father and five brothers, and followed him.

"And the songs that he sang," sobbed Jeddy, "they was prettier by far, than ever was pla-ayed on a flute or guitar."

The Bragdons reached the floor, seven sturdy figures, seven pairs of feet in heavy boots.

"Nor I don't see with ye neither. If Gus don't see with ye, I don't see with ye! . . . Wait for me, Gus; I'm comin' along!"

IT WAS Sarcy, little smooth-haired Sarcy Gray, her cheeks white as paper and spotted red, sixteen years old and built like a child, but standing up in her woman's dress and pushing past Roxanna into the aisle. Mindwell snatched at the escaping breadths of blue calico, but her fingers missed. Nothing now could detain Sarcy. As Gus stood up to fight the Lencscott gang and save the meeting-house, and went on standing to defy her father, her mite of courage had grown in her until for tonight she had no doubts, and did not hesitate; her eyes shone, a bright sea-blue, and her step was as light as woodbine tapping.

"Wait for me, Gus!"

The Elder gripped himself in his seat. For once his mouth was dry of words, his mind confused. He thought: "I feel old." It did not seem this could be his daughter, his second daughter. The second one sat quietly, and did as she was told; it was the other one, the older one, he had felt concern for, not this one. Sarcy was a child yet, always at home. Who was it who had said: "You've never had ought to do with any girl hurt Sarcy

Gray?" No man had ever had ought to do with Sarcy! She was a child—

"Go back to your seat, young woman!" burst from him. "When the time comes that you leave the House of the Lord like this, you'll leave mine too. Go back to your mother. This man has been smirched this evening-house and this society, and himself worse—"

Sarcy had been shouted at before and trembled. Now she scarcely heard. She reached Gus and clung to his arm, her cheek against his sleeve. He looked down at her. She was such a young thing to run after him so in the face of everybody, smooth and white and no weight at all to her. Smart at her work; it had been his way to notice what her hands could do before he began looking at her face and figure; but lately her eyes and the fineness of her skin were in his mind night and day, the way she walked like wind in the grass, the small warmth of her hand as it lay in his pocket. She was a little young thing to stand up so close to one who had done what he had done tonight, one with shoulders like his, arms and hands and chest and loins, crisp hair and pegged boots like his.

He said: "Well, I don't know. What'll I do with ye? We ain't got our roof up yet, ye know."

Sarcy said nothing.

"And who's goin' to marry us?" asked Gus. "Looks like your father won't."

Sarcy giggled.

"Elder Johnson would," she said. "I could walk to the beach, Gus. Couldn't you?"

"Sarcy Gray," gasped Mindwell, "have ye lost your wits?"

"I don't see what makes ye think so," Hannah Bragdon spoke out. "Other women besides her has got married, Mindwell. And she ain't got to be in a rush. She's welcome to stay to my house if she can't stay to home. Go along, Gus."

Jeddy broke off his humming and looked up with glazed eyes at the group of seven men and a girl in the doorway.

"I—I ain't got nobody along of me," he said. "Rest of ye goes together, and I set all alone. . . . I lost suthin'. I don't know what it was, but I lost suthin'. . . . I don't see what it was. I got my—I got my cider jug here all right. They wanted me—somebody—they kept a-sayin' in, 'Leave it out there; put down your jug out there, and come in.' They wanted—wanted me to let go holt of the—the last thing I got. . . . Don't nobody ever take a drink along of me. I hev to set a-drinkin' all alone—"

Moses Dockham started up, squealing and squeaking.

"Drink makes a devil or a dunce of every man that puts his mouth to it."

GUS, full of scorn for these who ranted, raved, and saw what was not there, pitiful in his own way for Jeddy Lencost, feeling Sarcy young and proud on his arm, and thinking of his good twenty acres, said: "It won't make neither a devil nor a dunce out of me!" He took up Jeddy's jug and drank deep from it. "There ye be, Jeddy," he said. "I been a-drinkin' with ye. Now ye better come out where the boys is."

"Augustus Bragdon," Moses Dockham shrieked, "your name is writ there on the paper!"

"My name has been struck off," said Gus. "It's fixed now so I took it on my own—Sarcy and me." He looked down and asked her: "You all ready to set sail?"

She smiled up valiantly; and so it was that in the midsummer of 1870, James Gray's younger daughter left the Nubble Point Church with one of the impious Bragdons, going through the summer dusk to dance for the first time to the tune of Thos. Blaine's fiddle until her feet could scarcely move another step, and Gus must carry her along York Road to his mother's. His arms were gentle to her that night, and his shoulder steady for her head to lie against. When she stirred and offered to get down and walk, he told her: "Ye rest easy. I shouldn't never know ye was there." He meant there was no weight to her; he knew well enough that it was neither stone nor bag of grain nor new calf he carried; and all his senses stung with telling him over and over it was Sarcy.

"Ye could sleep," he said. "I'll speak to ye when we git there."

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THE FRIENDLY RIVER

(Continued from page 47)

"I've already preempted the porch, old man," Howlett put in, smiling.

Randolph assented with an abashed nod of his head. He moved to the mantel end, selected a cigarette from a lacquer box and slowly lighted it. "Reckon," he said when he again faced around, "that I'll retire." His voice was quite calm as he added: "You aiming to make the maw'nin' train, Mr. Howlett?"

"Please. If you can manage it."

"No trouble." He leaned negligently against the mantel, eyes squinted against the smoke of his cigarette, obviously waiting. Howlett said after an awkward moment: "If you will show me to the porch, Miss Croynton—"

"Perhaps I had better do that," Randolph said. He looked at Norma.

She agreed sullenly.

He went out the door. Howlett followed him a few paces, then turned back. His whisper was cautious: "I must see you later."

She nodded. "Later. I'll come to the porch." Her voice was barely audible. He said aloud: "Good night—and thanks."

JUST before midnight Norma heard Elley Lou's step on the back stairs. She threw on a *peignoir* over her gown and slipped down the hall. The door gave to her hand. Elley Lou was undressing, and the room was heavy with the scent of a cheap jasmine perfume. She looked up, smiling. "Heah I is, Miss Norma." Her voice was contented, well-fed. She went on with her disrobing, somewhat *distraite*, but more from the thoughts she was saving than from physical weariness. A little repelled, a little fascinated, Norma withdrew quietly.

She stood for a moment on the landing of the back stairs, listening. The house was quiet. Outside, a poor-will's widow was reiterating its wistful call. Something in its familiar plaintiveness shocked her momentarily out of the haze that had possessed her all evening. She pressed one hot hand against her bosom. The whisper was torn from her: "I'm shameless!" Yet when she moved again, it was to put her foot quite calmly on the first tread of the stairs.

Carefully she felt her way down. The stairs gave into the kitchen. Moonlight illumined it. She passed rapidly into the dining-room, where long French windows opened to the sleeping-porch. Without hesitancy she turned the brass handle, opened the window. As she entered, Howlett sat up quickly.

"Ah," he said softly, eagerly, "you do want to talk to me. I was afraid you weren't going to."

"It's foolish," she whispered.

"Foolish?"

"Dangerous, then. But we have to understand each other."

In the act of pulling her face down to his, he paused. "Understand?" he repeated. His eyes flicked over her.

"Yes."

He drew her down to sit beside him, as he asked roughly: "What's this fellow Randolph Clay, to you?"

"The man everybody expects me to marry."

"Engaged?"

"Practically."

"Are you in love with him?"

"I was, perhaps. Until you came."

"I know. It hit me that way too."

The note of sincerity in his voice warmed her. He caught her strongly to him for a moment, then released her. His eyes darted to the moonlit grounds, swung back to the French windows, and he moistened his lips with the tip of his tongue. After a long silence she reminded him: "You wanted to see me."

He turned on her, a little angrily: "You're no unsophisticated country girl."

She inclined her head in assent. "I understand," she said.

He took her up quickly: "Do you?"

Again she nodded. "Yes. This is merely another adventure to you."

Perhaps because there was something not quite understandable to him in her voice, he denied that vehemently.

Quietly she asked: "What then?"

"So you want to bargain!" he retorted. She ignored his irritation. "No," she answered. "I don't want to bargain."

His confidence returned. "I'll take you away," he said. He was kissing her greedily.

"New York. You'll go, Norma?"

"Anywhere," she answered huskily.

"Anywhere with you." Curiously, she found herself wondering if the words rang true.

He jerked erect suddenly, listening.

"What is it?" she murmured.

"Some one coming. Outside!" There was an hysterical note in his voice.

She did not move. He pushed her away frantically. "For God's sake! No one would understand we were just talking! . . . It's Randolph! No, don't run. Sit down; crouch lower. You can't make the door without being seen. Here! This chiffonier in the corner!" He half flung her behind it.

Senseless, she thought. Why not have it over with? As well now as any time. She crouched rebelliously against the back of the chiffonier. Heavy steps came along the graveled path. It was like Randolph, she thought with reluctant admiration. It wasn't in his nature to sneak. She waited for him to speak.

"Howlett!" he called. There seemed to be no anger in his voice. Norma relaxed a little. "Howlett!" he called again.

The man on the bed stirred, sat up. He asked in a moment with well-feigned sleepiness: "Who is it? What do you want?"

"It's Rand Clay." Steps sounded on the porch, the screen door opened. "I got to thinking about you in the night, Howlett. I got to worrying about you."

Apprehensively the reply came: "About me?"

"Yes. I says to myse'f: 'What will Howlett think of us? What will he think of our boasted Southern hospitality, putting him out to sleep on an uncomfortable couch on the porch?'"

"But I'm perfectly comfortable!" Howlett protested.

Randolph went on as though the other man had not spoken.

"I got to thinking that we had no hospitality really worthy of you to offer. I

got to worrying about what you'd think of us rude people of this back-country. 'Shucks,' I said to myself, 'I've got to set this thing right.' Having him sleeping on a cot like that! The son of a millionaire!" So then the idea came to me. I'd do the thing right. I'd take you right this minute to the resort hotel down-river. It isn't but eight or nine miles. So I called them up and had them reserve you a room." He broke off, clucked his tongue against the roof of his mouth. "I declare, I don't know what you're going to think of us. I certainly apologize."

"You can stop talking now," Howlett said thickly. "I get your point. There's no need to go on emphasizing it. And you might clear out and let me dress."

"I'll wait for you on the steps," Randolph answered. Again he said mildly: "Tch! Tch! I sure don't know what you're going to think of us."

When the door closed behind him, Howlett swung out of bed. He dressed, moving here and there about the room, stopping finally in front of the chiffonier. Norma looked up into his eyes.

"Go," she said softly. "Go with him. Make no resistance. I'll come to you by boat. Wait for me on the pier."

He nodded, his lips curling back over his white teeth in a vindictive grin.

"I'm ready, Clay," he called.

"Good," Randolph answered. "No need for you to wake the folks to say good-bye. I'll do that for you in the maw'nin'."

"You overwhelm me," Howlett retorted furiously.

FROM her own room, as she dressed, Norma looked out on the moon-flooded river. She saw a man come along the bank, moving with the characteristic shuffle of the negro. She could see that he was tall and nattily dressed—the gun-club negro, doubtless. He was moving along carelessly; his subdued, tuneless whistle reached her. A moment later another negro detached himself from the shadows of the house and ambled as carelessly toward the dock. It was George, her father's man-of-all-work. She heard the amiable greetings the two exchanged, saw them sit down together. Her lips curved in a hard smile.

She finished dressing, packed a bag and stole downstairs. At the front door she hesitated, turned, and going to her desk, hurriedly scribbled a note. She addressed it to her father, propped it against a vase, and slipped outdoors. The two negroes still sat on the dock. She exclaimed in vexation. The shadow of the house thrown by the low moon splashed elongately and darkly toward a clump of pines. Keeping in this shadow, she reached the trees without being discovered. She was not far from the dock now. She sat down, waiting for the men to move.

The gun-club negro was talking. His diction was crisp, Northern, if not grammatical. He was telling some rambling, pointless story. She could see George nod his head occasionally. He was a big man, this George: big, good-natured, de-

pendable, likable. His powerful knotted hands lay in his lap; his huge shoulders hunched forward.

The other black finished his story. He arose, yawned, stretched.

"Tired," he said, "but had me a good time tonight. Pritty little yallah gal what lives around here."

George shifted on his seat.

"Beats all," the other went on, "how these gals fall for me. I reckon it's my manner. I got a smooth way of gettin' around them."

George grunted.

The gun-club negro continued: "Only thing I got against this little yallah gal is that she's easy. Too easy." He broke off to laugh loudly. "I like 'em harder. I like to experience my technique on 'em."

The laugh died in his throat. One of George's big hands had seized him. The other smashed into his face, tearing him loose from George's own grasp, and lifting him off the dock into the river. It was shallow inshore; he lay there motionless. George looked down on him a moment, then deliberately turned away, shuffling up the bank to the house.

Norma's voice halted him. "George!"

"Yassum," he said.

"He'll drown, you fool, if he moves!" she shot at him. "Get him out of there. You don't want to hang, do you? That girl isn't worth a thought, let alone hanging for, and it's time you knew it."

"Yassum," George said submissively. He waded into the river, picked up the negro and deposited him on the dock.

"What I do now, Miss Norma?"

"He's coming around," Norma said shortly. The gun-club negro twitched,

rolled, sat up weakly. He said in a moment: "I'm all right, ma'am. Stopped that one with my chin." He stood up, weaving a little, steadied himself.

"You'd better go," Norma said with repressed fury. "And if I ever catch you around here, I'll jail you."

He touched his cap. "Yes, ma'am," he said. Staggering to his boat, he got in and fumblingly unfastened the lines. The starter whirled; the engine caught; the boat moved out into the stream. Norma swung on George. "Go to bed!" she commanded briefly.

George shifted uneasily from one foot to the other. "Miss Norma—" he began.

Impatiently she flung at him: "What is it?"

"Ah aint lettin' no niggah lie that way about Elley Lou."

"You fool," she answered, but there was neither anger nor contempt in her voice. "You fool. Go to bed."

SHE watched him make his way to the cabin in rear of the house. When a light showed in his window, she walked back along the bank and got her bag from the clump of pines. Her own small boat with its light outboard motor was tied to the dock. The river was tidal at this point, and she noticed apprehensively that the tide was coming in strongly. Rapid calculation of the force of the flow told her that it would take two hours to make the journey. By motor-car over an indifferent road would take scarcely twenty minutes.

She was consumed with impatience. Anything might happen in two hours. Tears of vexation stung her eyes. "You

too," she said, "against me! Shutting him out!"

Her overwrought nerves sought in the river for signs of tangible enmity. She found none. Smooth, wide and confident, it rolled on to the Gulf. The perspective smoothed out the currents. There was no anger in its aspect, only a great sureness, a great patience. It flashed over her that in Randolph there was some quality of the river: the same deep flow, the same patience, the same insistent firmness. And in black George. Perhaps the river made men that way. The river worked on its men, molded them to its character, upheld them, disdaining the alien.

She dismissed the thought with a furious little exclamation. She would have to take the car. She did not want to do this; the chance of meeting Randolph on his return journey was great. Then she thought of running without lights and seeking some side road whenever approaching headlights came into view. She decided to risk it.

She had run six of the eight miles before the lights of a car shot their jouncing gleam in her direction. There was no side road in sight; she remembered none in the immediate vicinity. Without hesitation she twisted the wheel strongly, bumped over the shallow ditch and ran along the flat pineland for thirty yards before a small tree brought her up. She waited, crouched down over the wheel, while the other car ran rapidly past. She could not determine whether it was Randolph's or not.

The experience had shaken her. She sat there for a very quiet, looking,

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straight in front of her. The period of indecision passed. Her lips hardened; she got out of the car. "I'll walk," she said aloud.

THOUGH she was driven into hiding frequently by oncoming cars, she walked the two remaining miles in less than three-quarters of an hour. The small town was quiet, its Saturday-night ebullience spent. She turned into the main street, which was bordered by new and pretentious brick blocks. Straight ahead she saw the cluster of lights which adorned the municipal pier. It was less than three blocks distant, but it seemed to elongate itself endlessly.

She came to the pier. The beat of her heels fell in staccato rhythm on the surfaced concourse. Her mouth twisted in sardonic appreciation of the purposeful sound they emitted, and its effect on the uniformed policeman who was coming toward her. "Evenin', ma'am," he said politely and angled away.

She was stopped by the pier's outer rampart. A figure moved toward her—a woman. A voice asked: "Miss Croynton?"

"Yes," Norma answered.

"I am Mrs. Howlett."

Norma replied without surprise: "Yes, Mrs. Howlett?"

"Wade sent me to you. He isn't exactly in a condition to come himself. He had a disagreement with one of your friends—Mr. Clay. When Mr. Clay discovered that Wade had a wife, it seemed to make him decidedly angry."

"Ah," Norma said.

"You see," Mrs. Howlett went on conversationally, "I was to meet Wade in Laveland. I got news of the crash, and came on down here."

Norma nodded.

"He seems quite mad about you, Miss Croynton," the other woman went on calmly. "I've never troubled much lately about his various affairs. This one seems rather different. It must be; he actually told me about it. Perhaps we could reach a solution. We are modern persons."

"Clever, Norma thought approvingly. She said aloud to herself: "I came here to meet Wade. I made no conditions with him. I was prepared for any contingency—yes, prepared to find that he was married. I think I suspected it from the first. It didn't seem to make much difference. It doesn't make much difference now."

"I like your frankness," Mrs. Howlett said appreciatively. "And I like the type you represent." She drew Norma to a cluster of lights. "Look at me, my dear," she said.

Norma saw a dark face that was without beauty but not without distinction, a figure that was lean and somewhat angular. Mrs. Howlett's voice—and it was a beautiful voice—cut in on her astonished conjectures: "I'm not pretty, am I? Nor physically attractive. Yet Wade married me. I must have something to attract such a fine physical specimen as Wade. Do you know what I have, Miss Croynton?"

Norma nodded. Her throat was suddenly dry.

"Money," Mrs. Howlett said. "A great deal of money. And Wade has none.

His principal occupation is spending mine. You see, Miss Croynton?"

"I'm not interested in that angle of it," Norma replied, hardening. "I hadn't thought of money."

"You misunderstand me," Mrs. Howlett cut in swiftly. "That is not an argument to be used against you." She added slowly after a moment: "I wonder if you will believe me when I say that if you two are truly interested in each other, I'd be willing to divorce Wade. I've evidence from former affairs."

"You said that to him?" Norma asked incredulously.

"Just that," Mrs. Howlett replied.

"One comes to the end of one's patience,

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you know. I am farther advanced than that. I look on him as a totally unwarranted expense. But perhaps you'd like to discuss this with Wade. I know I should, with you present. Won't you come with me to the hotel?"

"You went to give him up," Norma said.

"Yes," Her voice was calm, convincing. "I'm ten years older than he. I've come to the age where I want quiet more than anything else on earth. I'm emotionally worn out. He's done that. I confess I'd like to see him in good hands. I'd even make some sort of settlement with him. I've always supplied money for his whims. He knew I'd supply money so that he might gratify this new passion. That's why he told me about you. But the reason he was so bold was merely because he knows he has come to the end of his tether where I am concerned. I'm not equal to the wear and tear of living with him. You are younger—you may be."

"Then you've had a lot of—of this sort of thing?"

"Yes. A lot." The simple statement was more effective than any possible elaboration could be. Norma drew back with a sense of physical nausea. She said in a moment bitterly: "I believe you. You must think me an awful fool."

Again the other woman answered, "Yes." In a moment she made a little conciliatory gesture with one hand. "Forgive me. I do understand."

Norma winked back the tears, fighting for the last shred of her self-respect,

"No man," she said, and her laugh was hysterical, "should have eyes and eyelashes like that."

Mrs. Howlett leaned toward her, her face grim.

"If I could think of him as a great romantic, a great lover, I could forgive him," she said bitterly. "But he's superficial in everything—including his courage."

Norma was incapable of a reply.

Mrs. Howlett reached over and patted her arm. "My dear," she said, "if you feel you love him enough, you can undertake to make him over—with your eyes open as they are now. I'm not concerned with the haste of this attachment of yours. I believe one can love at first sight."

Norma could not conceal her quick gesture of repulsion. "No," she answered quickly. "I don't seem to be capable of even looking after myself."

"Tomorrow morning," said Mrs. Howlett quietly, "you will probably awake and think this matter over. You'll have forgotten some of the things which so impress you now. You'll think that I've been clever, that I was fighting to keep Wade." She laughed shortly, then slipped a card into Norma's hand. "This is my address. The offer I made you will remain open."

Norma shook her head and turned to the parapet. She felt the other woman's grasp tighten on her arm, fall away. She heard her footsteps recede. When she looked around, the pier was empty save for the strolling policeman.

The exhalation of the river smote her nostrils. The odor was damp, salty, penetrating; it impressed itself on her palate. She looked over the wall. The moon had withdrawn itself from the water. The softer starlight gave it an illumination that was faint and mystical. Her memory evoked suddenly George's strong, patient face. She heard his voice: "Ah aint lettin' no niggah lie that way about Elley Lou."

The depth and complexity of the emotion which flayed her was scarcely understandable to her. Tears coursed down her cheeks.

"Fool!" she sobbed harshly. "Fool!"

But she was not addressing George.

ELLEY LOU was in the kitchen when Norma reached the house.

"Mash goodness, honey," she said in a strident whisper, "yo' is sittin' out late. I done sent Gawge lookin' foh yo' an houah ago."

"What are you doing up?" Norma demanded.

"Lowah yo' voice, Miss Norma, honey," Elley Lou begged. "Mist' Croynton and Mist' Rand soun' asleep."

"Asleep," Norma repeated. She sat down suddenly. In a moment her eyes swept Elley Lou's face. "Does Rand know I've been out?"

"Him? No ma'am!" Elley Lou broke into low laughter. "Deey ain't no one heah know y'-all been out but Gawge an' me. Gawge got me up when yo' done lef'. He was plumb scared sick. He want me to tell Mist' Rand, but I say no. 'Let her alone,' I say. 'She gwine come back. How come yo' want to interfere in white-folks' doin's? Yo' lookin' foh a bump on yo' head?' And he say that he guess y'-all know what yo' doin'. But when two

o'clock come, I done got nervous mahse'f, and sen' him to town lookin' fo' yo'."

"He missed me," Norma answered. She leaned back, relaxing, acutely aware of the familiarity of her surroundings. "Take off my shoes," she added in a moment. "My feet hurt, Elley Lou."

The quadron bent to unfasten her shoes.

"Gawge sittin' lay down de law to me," she said, chuckling. "He say he done drown dat gun-club niggah, almos'."

He say he catch me fannin' mah foot aroun' once mo', and he gwine beat me within a inch of mah life."

Norma controlled the trembling of her lips. "You've had your fun," she said in a low voice. "You'd better marry George. As a matter of fact, he's much too good for you."

"Spect I had," Elley Lou returned comfortably. Her eyes slid to Norma's face. She said cautiously: "We bot may-be learn something, Miss Norma."

Norma's reply was barely audible. "If you can call it that," she said.

"Spect I bettah mek mah lace," Elley Lou offered tentatively.

"Yes," Norma said, to herself, "I expect you had, Elley Lou. It's the only safe thing."

Elley Lou straightened up purposefully. "Clar to gracious," she said, "we's both done wohn out, plumb wohn out. I think, mebbe, I scramble us both a couple of aigs, Miss Norma, honey."

THE GHOST LANTERN

(Continued from page 27)

And he in the dark of his loneliness covered his face with his hands and drew in his breath sharply. "Alice—Alice!"

There were five days more.

They gave up fighting, after the second. In his arms that night on the boat-deck she whispered desperately:

"Don't—don't please let's make silly old fools of ourselves before the whole ship."

"Damn the ship—damn it! We're not old. Don't say that again, Alice, my dear. I love you. You're young—always young—beautiful."

Again her arms stole round his neck. They faced it that last morning as the *Sato* steamed down the coast to Tokyo Bay—faced it silently and alone. All morning they stood at the rail watching the last miles of their lost youth slip behind them. "In three hours now—in two—in one."

"I shall go through to Tokyo, as soon as—Alice—I can't leave you! I'll go on to Tientsin and make him give you up."

"No," she said. "No. We will say good-by here. We must, you know," she

said flatly; "therefore we will. He needs me more than you do—much more. You are strong, and he isn't. It's my job. It's always been my job, and I can't shirk it, for myself. That is the world, life—I think. Doing things one must do."

The immigration men came aboard to stamp their papers. At two, his luggage was through the Customs.

He came back for one last word.

"Alice," he said, "I love you. I love you more than I have ever loved any woman in my life before. I shall always love you, and I shall always be dead without you."

Her eyes smoldered with the fire of that first night on the boat-deck—smoldered and died under a film of soft tears. "Good-by," she whispered. . . .

It is forty-five minutes by electric train from Yokohama to Tokyo. The *Sato* lay over two days while her howling donkey

engines made the night hideous under sharp yellow floodlights.

As he came into the lobby after dinner, he saw her there—alone, sitting in one of the wicker chairs under the soft lights.

"One more day," she said. "We owe that to ourselves."

When they parted finally, it was in the same two chairs. Her luggage was down, and the taxi was due in ten minutes for the train back.

"Let's please just sit without speaking."

Neither one of them spoke again, as the hand of his watch raced on to ten. The white-uniformed boy came up, bowed and sucked in his breath.

"Taxi, please," he hisped.

She stood up. Their hands touched once. He watched her cross over and go slowly down the steps. He saw the glass doors swing behind her—heard the crash of the taxi door. That was all. . . .

To get away from a place still fragrant with the thought of her, he went to Nikko in the first train, knowing nothing of it. All the way, the wheels thumped and pounded at his heart. "Alice—Alice, I

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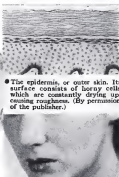


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● The epidermis, or outer skin. Its surface consists of horny cells which are constantly drying up, causing roughness. (By permission of the publisher.)

● Skin made harsh, yellow, thick, by rough, dried particles—these are dead cells of the horny layer of the skin. They can actually be melted.

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BROMO
QUININE**

love you, love you." And presently he knew that he would follow her and take her for his own. That night he would go to Tientsin. That night he would go for the first time since he had met her.

The next afternoon he wandered up the hillside to Icyu, paid his yen at the gate and strolled round the courtyard. He watched the boys swing the rums against the heavy time-bell until its last reverberating echoes died in the high cryptomerias. He saw the sacred dance at the shrine of Futa-ara, and listened to the hideous sandal-clicking of the hordes of pilgrims who came to sound the gongs and clap their hands for Buddha's ear. Five days he spent in Nikko—five days of peace and happiness. Three days—four days more, and he would follow her. . . . Ten years together. Ten years more of life with her by his side—then together they would wait complacently for the falling of the curtain. It was enough to have lived for this. He would go back and work again, pick up the threads where he had dropped them—weave them anew for her. Forty? Nonsense! Together, they would be twenty forever.

IT was in the papers when he got back to Tokyo. It struck him between the eyes for a moment; then his heart leaped with the joy of it. But his one thought was for her. He cabled her at once. Her answer was in his hands at four o'clock.

Six months, please. Alice.

Two days later he saw in the papers again that she was taking the body home

on the next boat. He booked for San Francisco four days after her, and cabled J. T. to expect him in eight weeks.

In the bar that evening he heard a man say: "The best thing in the world for old George. Bateman hated him, you know. But to go down with flu—that's irony for you. His wife—knew her slightly. She's out there now. Just came. Feel terribly sorry for her. Loved him, they say. Beautiful woman, and much younger than he was. Thirty-five only—looks thirty. —Boy saw—two Scotch tansan and the dice-box! —Funny—you just get to like Japan when you're leaving. Three years for me. I leave on the tenth. *Hakome Maru*—Christmas in Paris. . . . Three sixes, I'll stand on that."

The next day a flat-beeled woman with horn-rimmed glasses stood with her guide in front of the Ghost Lantern by the corner of the shrine of Futa-ara Jinja.

"But you don't believe that, do you?" "Who knows," said the guide, "the ways of Buddha?"

"Buddha—but Buddha is not Christ—Buddha is not the real God."

"No," said the guide.

"There are no such things as ghosts."

"This is very long time ago—and happiness is very fine thing. Who knows? It may be better thing to live happy than go fine place when die."

"You shouldn't say such things. They are wicked."

The guide shrugged: "Who knows?"

The fare to Nikko from Tokyo is four yen fifty from Ueno Station. . . .

They were married quietly. Christmas at St. George's in New York.

HOOVER OFF THE RECORD

(Continued from page 23)

emergency that he felt so strongly were vital to the welfare of the country, were swept aside. He forgot for the moment how seriously he was at odds with his successor. He was the human being responding to human emotions.

He said he must get off a message to Mr. Roosevelt at the earliest possible moment. He directed me to get the details while he worked on the telegram. I burned the wires to Miami. When the White House demands an immediate connection, it gets it. Within less than one minute a line to the South was cleared, and I was talking with the publisher of a newspaper in Miami. It happened that he had witnessed the attempted assassination. He had all the essential information. He gave it to me, as only a newspaper man can in such circumstances. I relayed it to the President. He then dictated the message he had prepared to send to Mr. Roosevelt, and a statement to be given to the press. As I was making them public, he was on the telephone directing that the guard for his successor be increased.

Then he was back at the panic problem again. The reports were increasingly bad, frightfully so. He continued his drive, working through the night. I had seen him confronted by many grave problems, but I had never seen him so concerned. However, try as he might, he could not budge the incoming administration. Whatever the approach, Mr. Roosevelt was not responsive.

Without coöperation, the administration was well-nigh helpless. With it, disaster still could be averted. Despite persistent overtures, the incoming administration was adamant. It would take control on March 4th. It would not intervene before that time. The blood would be on Mr. Hoover's head. Such was the tenor of responses conveyed to the President and his associates from various sources.

"There seems to be little further we can do," said the President. "Yet we must try, even as the American people are writing off the New Deal."

Thus a bad situation became all the more desperate. The President and his subordinates charged with fiscal affairs renewed their overtures, despite all the previous rebuffs. There still was time for constructive coöperation that would save the situation and alleviate unnecessary suffering among millions of people.

NOW, the public may not realize it, but a political party gets accurate information about the opposite political party, just as an army in time of war gets information about the enemy facing it across No Man's Land. About this time we got such information regarding the attitude of the incoming administration. I shall not disclose who gave it or how I got it, nor reveal the name of the intermediary. Here is the message with names deleted:

"_____ had lunch with me. He

said they were fully aware of the banking situation, and that the system undoubtedly would collapse within a few days, which would place the responsibility in the lap of President Hoover. "We should worry," he said, "about anything excepting rehabilitating the country after March 4th. Then there will be several moves: No. 1, an embargo on the exportation of yellow chips. No. 2, suspension of specie payment. No. 3, reflation, if necessary after No. 1 and No. 2."

How accurate was the foregoing information needs hardly to be emphasized. There was after March 4 an embargo on gold, the "yellow chips," with the United States going off the gold standard. There was a national banking holiday by Presidential proclamation. There was inflation.

The meaning of the message was that so far as the incoming administration was concerned, the country was to be permitted to sink to the lowest depth, so that the new administration could start from the very bottom in making its recovery efforts. That was the purpose all along.

THE few remaining days of the Hoover administration found the people more panic-stricken than at any previous time. It was not strictly a banking panic that was closing banks and drying up business. Rather it was three panics all rolled into one: banking, currency and gold.

The retiring administration considered privately the desirability of resorting to clearing-house script. It might best meet the emergency situation. If it had to be issued, it would be used. The suggestion of guaranteeing bank-deposits did not register. It was contended, considering the attitude of the people, that if the Government should guarantee even seventy-five per cent of the deposits, withdrawals of funds very likely would continue. It was recognized, furthermore, that the policy of banks in distress of limiting payments to five or ten per cent was doing no good. Mr. Hoover and his advisers were fully aware that it was limiting business dreadfully.

The President was continuously in conference with his financial assistants, and directly or through them, in contact with outstanding financiers and leaders of the new government. Through Secretary Mills, for instance, who had appointments with the man who was to succeed him, Secretary-designate Woodin, Mr. Hoover let it be known that his administration would even forward to Congress any legislation to meet the crisis that the incoming administration would care to sponsor. If Mr. Roosevelt would indicate his pleasure, the President would incorporate his wishes in a special message. In other words, so long as Mr. Roosevelt would not join with him, he would join with the man who so soon was to succeed him, sponsoring any recommendation Mr. Roosevelt deemed desirable. Even this offer did not bring the desired response from the President-elect.

Mr. Hoover persisted to the last. He knew action was vital. So long as he had the power, he would strive for action. If he could have acted alone, he would have done it long since. But from the beginning of the year, it was an absolute certainty Congress would respond only to the President-elect.

(Please turn to page 119)

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A Few Things I Have Learned in Forty Years of Teaching

E. M. HARTMAN, A.M., Pd.D.

IT MAY seem reasonable that in 40 years of teaching one should have learned some things and gained some convictions as to its methods and purpose. These things, because of limited time, I can merely list. Some of them will seem trite but I have seen all of them borne out in my experience.

1. I have learned that teaching is like life. A teacher must always be a learner. He can never know it all; and much that he learns must come through enlightening, enriching and mellowing experience. In his younger years a teacher is likely to be guided by theory and his head; in later years by experience and his heart.

2. I have learned that a blow that raises a boy's spirits is always worth more than a knock that depresses them. Anything that humiliates a pupil in the presence of others is a serious mistake.

3. I have learned that in discussing troubles with a boy his response and frankness are in proportion to the understanding and decency shown in the teacher's approach. A boy is often helped more by being given a "break" rather than a penalty.

4. I have learned that an attitude of suspicion is blighting to student-teacher relations. Evidence of a teacher's confidence is a challenge, an inspiration and a control in a boy's life. In his teens "a feller needs a friend" and the teacher can be that understanding friend. It is better to be deceived than to show unwillingness to take a boy's word.

5. I have learned to run a school with fewer rules and without scolding boys. While the law is to some extent a schoolmaster and we can not dispense with it entirely, I have learned that the wishes of a respected teacher are vastly more controlling and molding in a boy's conduct and ideals than rules and threats can ever be.

6. While the Bible tells us that after their death there was an impassable gulf fixed between the rich man and Lazarus, I have learned that there is not necessarily an impassable gulf between the slower boy and the bright boy. Poor work is often due to causes that are not in-

herent but removable if found. Every now and then I have seen a tortoise beat a hare both in school and in later life.

7. I have learned that a boy's interest in any subject is often determined by the inspiration he gets from the teacher's own interest in that subject. Recently one of our boys who expected to become a preacher became a geologist because he had an especially inspiring teacher in that subject in college.

8. I have learned that the teaching gift is a matter of personality rather than training. Training is necessary but all the training of all the schools can not make an inspiring teacher of a man or woman who does not have the teaching gift.

9. I have learned that a teacher's example is more effective than a volume of precepts.

10. I have learned that it is better for a student to learn a smaller number of subjects well than learn many subjects superficially. The quality of learning and knowing is more important than the subject matter. Slovenly learning in school leads to slovenly working and living in later life. Sixty or seventy per cent is not a passing grade in business or professional life.

11. I have learned that the most important thing in teaching and learning is not the *what* but the *how*. *What* to learn and *what* to think is important, but *how* to learn and *how* to think is vastly more important. The great prehistoric animals perished and disappeared from the face of the earth because they could not adapt themselves to the change of climate. We are facing a rapid change in our social and economic climate and in order to survive and thrive our young people must be able to learn, to think, to interpret, to evaluate—and to adapt themselves. This is no time for fixation except in quality of motive and character.

12. I have learned that the development of character is more important than the gaining of knowledge.

Good health, clear, straight thinking, wholesome feeling, integrity and good will for all—these are the objectives of the teacher for the pupil.

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Appendicitis Warnings



"I can give it to you, of course. But if I were you I wouldn't take anything for it without the advice of a doctor. Those abdominal pains may mean appendicitis."

THE symptoms of appendicitis vary. Almost always, continued pain and tenderness in the abdomen are the first indications of an acutely inflamed appendix. Of course, not all intestinal aches are caused by appendicitis, but anyone who has continued, unrelieved abdominal pain, especially if it is accompanied by nausea or vomiting, needs competent medical attention at the earliest possible moment and not self-medication.

If it is appendicitis the use of a laxative is dangerous. It stimulates violent intestinal action and may spread the inflammation, cause the appendix to rupture, or induce peritonitis. Moreover, the sufferer should not be given food, drugs or medicine of any kind unless prescribed by the attending physician.



Send for your doctor immediately if there is any suspicion of appendicitis. In making his diagnosis he may find it necessary to make one or more blood cell counts or to observe your temperature for a few hours, keeping you quietly in bed under close observation.

Your doctor may decide that the attack does not clearly denote appendicitis and can be relieved without an operation. But if it is a clear case of acute appendicitis, he will probably recommend an operation within the shortest possible time.

Performed by an expert surgeon, early in the attack, before the appendix has burst or peritonitis has begun, an operation for acute appendicitis should cause little concern.

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RECIPE FOR MURDER

by VINCENT STARRETT

who wrote "Murder on B Deck"

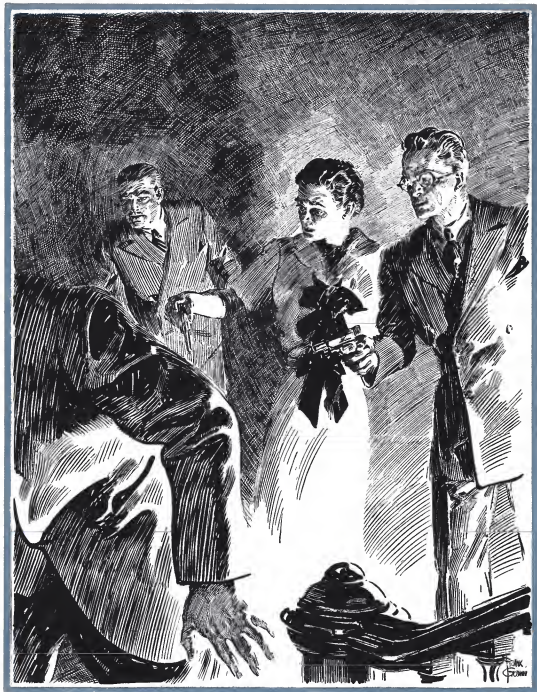
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"I'm almost sorry for you," the detective Riley Blackwood had said when he ran the murderer to earth, "but you're going to the Chair." "Very clever, Blackwood," the man sneered. "But I have a paper here—" He reached into his inner packet, and Kitty Mocke screamed. Her ridiculous 32 cracked just an instant before the larger weapon. The man clutched at his wounded arm—then bounded for the door. The next moment he was out of sight.

RECIPE FOR MURDER

by VINCENT STARRETT

THE brown-eyed bellhop shrilled his way across the crowded hotel lobby and vanished along the corridor leading to the dining-rooms:

"Doctor Trample. . . . Doctor H. C. Trample. . . . Doctor Trample!"

The girl in the red raincoat sat tensely forward on the edge of her chair, beside a cluster of potted palms, and waited. Her ridiculously small umbrella dripped slowly at her side; her small foot impatiently tapped the rug beneath it. Between the anxious eyes a little frown had settled. Dr. Trample, she told herself—Dr. H. C. Trample—was taking his time about keeping his appointment with her. And Miss Blaine Oliver, she inwardly added, was beginning to wish that she had breakfasted at home.

Outside, the rain fell drearily. It was a melancholy morning to drive into the city for breakfast with a stranger! Well, almost a stranger. She had been a little girl when Horace Trample had seen her last—barely out of pinafores. Would he remember her? She was certain enough that she would remember him.

Suddenly she was aware that the boy was in the lobby again. His voice, keyed to a more temperate pitch, was making a final plea for Dr. H. C. Trample to reveal himself. Then it was at her elbow.

"I'm sorry, miss; but he doesn't answer. I've been everywhere. Are you sure he isn't in his room?"

Miss Oliver nodded. "I've telephoned twice," she said; "but I'll try again. There's nothing else to do." She fumbled in her purse. "Thank you!"

"Thank you," said the boy. "I'll go round again, if you like."

"No, don't bother. I'll keep on telephoning until he comes in. Something must have kept him," she added apologetically, and hated herself for the remark. It was her pride she was defending, not Horace Trample.

How much longer, she wondered, as she moved toward the telephones, would her militant pride permit her to wait? Physicians, after all, were important human beings. They had duties in the world that set them apart, somewhat, from their neighbors. But they were inclined, she fancied, to presume a trifle on the fact of their profession. She had known young doctors before. However, this one was no longer precisely young. And he was really, rather important, she believed. A specialist of some kind. That he was a New Yorker, only recently returned to the city of his birth, had no bearing on the case. He had grown up in Chicago; it was as familiar to him as the palm of his hand.

She lifted the receiver, and after a moment said: "Room Nine-four-O, please." Thereafter there were sounds of strident ringing which continued intermittently. At length there was something final. "Room Nine-four-O does not answer," said the operator; whereupon Blaine Oliver replaced the receiver upon its hook and turned her troubled gaze upon the lobby. Over a door, the hands of a great clock stood at nine-forty-five.

With compressed lips she started for the desk, but she had not taken a dozen steps, when a quick hand was laid on her arm. She whirled breathlessly, half smiling and half scolding. Her face fell.

"Blaine!" cried the young man at her elbow. "What brings you downtown at this hour of the morning?"

"I could kill you, Harry," she replied in level tones. "I thought you were some one else. Why aren't you?" Then her eyes brightened, and a little laugh escaped her lips. "I'm annoyed—pay no attention to me."

"But what's the trouble? Can't I help?"

"I'm starving," said Miss Oliver. "I haven't had a mouthful since I got up. I had a breakfast engagement at the hotel here, at nine o'clock—and my friend, if you must know, has not shown up."

He laughed. "It's a situation easily remedied."

"I know," she said; "you'll take me to breakfast. Thanks! I don't mean to be ungrateful, really. I may even let you do it. But I'm not sure that I ought to leave the lobby. Look here, do you mind if I tell you about it?"

They found chairs, and she told him the tale of the missing specialist and of her hunger. Mr. Prentiss was sympathetic.

"You're a comfortable person to talk to, Harry," she admitted. "You see, I don't know the man from Adam, really. I remember him from my youth—all right, my childhood, then! At that time I felt a sort of romantic attachment for him. He must be nearly forty now!"

"What did he do? Call you up?"

"Yes—called me up. It was all right, of course. He was Dad's friend too. He hadn't heard that Dad was dead." She added: "It couldn't be a hoax, I suppose?"

"Probably not," said Prentiss. "No, he's been detained, probably. Doctors—"

"But suppose something has happened to him?"

"You haven't been upstairs?"

"To his room, you mean? No, I haven't."

"I mean—if he had been taken ill, during the night—and couldn't answer the telephone—"

"I see!" She nodded. "Then I ought to go up. Well, it's giving him the benefit of the doubt. You'll go with me?"

"Of course."

They crossed the lobby and entered an elevator. The steel gates clanged twice, and they debouched upon the ninth-floor level. Before the door of Room 940 Prentiss stopped abruptly.

"Hello," he said, "there's a card on his doorknob. 'Please Do Not Disturb!' The beggar isn't up yet!"

Miss Oliver paled and laid a hand on his arm. "Harry," she said; "he's ill! He must be!"

He frowned, hesitated—then brought his knuckles up to knock.

No answer—no sound from the bedchamber save that somewhere beyond the barrier a little clock was ticking.

"Try the door!" cried Miss Oliver. She stepped forward and laid her hand on the knob. "Locked!"

PRENTISS was uncomfortable. "It's absurd," he said. "He can't be sleeping that soundly." He knocked again with greater violence. "Not a peep out of him!" He grumbled. "You don't happen to know whether or not he's a drinking man?"

Miss Oliver ignored the question.

"Harry," she cried, "we've got to get inside! Something has happened! Don't you see? He's ill—or something!" She raised her voice and called through the panels: "Doctor Trample! It's I—Blaine Oliver!"

Prentiss yielded reluctantly; he hated trouble. "I suppose so," he agreed; and in the next instant was visited by an inspiration. "There's a house telephone in that little niche we passed. I'll call the manager."

In less than a minute he was jiggling the hook with nervous fingers. "Hello," he called. "Hello—hello! Operator—give me the manager, as quickly as you can."

Don't argue! There's a man sick, up here. Room Ninety-four. Send up the house physician too."

He banged down the receiver and hurried back to Miss Oliver.

"That'll do it," he said. "We'll have the whole establishment up here in no time."

In a short time they heard the elevator doors crash open and crash shut again. Around the turn that concealed them from view came two men.

"Did you telephone?" asked the manager, who was foremost.

"About a sick man? Where is he?"

"He's inside," said Blaine Oliver. "We can't get in. The door is locked."

The manager's eye had spotted the card hanging upon the knob. It worried him. "After all—" he began, and stopped. "I suppose you've knocked!" he said then. "Is he a friend of yours?"

"Of course he is!"

"We're not supposed to disturb a guest who chooses to sleep late," the manager protested. "Have you tried to telephone?"

Prentiss was exasperated. "My God!" he exploded. "It's obvious that the man's ill. He needs attention. Of course we've telephoned! And knocked! Miss Oliver had an appointment with him for nine o'clock. What is needed to get in here—a search-warrant?"

The manager stepped forward, tapped tentatively on the panels with his nails, then tapped a little harder. After a moment he gently shook the door-handle.

His eyes sought those of his companion.

"You didn't say the door was locked," growled the second man. "We'll have to get a pass-key."

Very suddenly the manager came to life. He turned. "Wait here, Joe—I'll be back in a couple of minutes."

He hurried off. Prentiss and Miss Oliver turned their glances upon the man who was left.

"We looked around for a maid and couldn't find one," explained Prentiss. "Are you the doctor?"

But the man did not look like a doctor; he looked to Prentiss like a retired pugilist. By an interesting coincidence, this was precisely what he was.

"House detective," growled the man laconically. After a moment he added: "The doctor's on his way up. That is, if they can find him, he is. Who is your friend, lady?"

"Doctor Trample," said Blaine Oliver. "I had an appointment with him, and he didn't keep it." She explained, briefly, what had happened. "I'm afraid we are wasting valuable time," she finished.

The burly detective shrugged. "Can't be helped," he said. "We'll get in as quick as we can." He looked significantly at Prentiss. "Not much use, from the looks of it! But I don't want to scare you!"

Miss Oliver drew in her breath sharply.

"I don't want to scare you," repeated the detective. "I was just preparing you, in case. Maybe it ain't as bad as we think. Was he a drinking man, this Temple?"

"I don't know," she answered, and did not bother to correct his notion of the Doctor's name.

He blinked at her in slow surprise, then turned with alacrity as the manager, Meffat, rounded the turn in the corridor, followed by a stumbling maid who carried a jingling ring.

"Lucky!" puffed the little manager. "Found the maid on the other side of the corridor. We'll have the door open now in just a mo'. Open it up," he ordered briskly. He glanced at Miss Oliver. "Will you wait outside?"

She shook her head. "I'm going in," she answered. "I am the only one who knows him."

The maid was fumbling with her key; at length she turned the lock and flung open the door. They pushed past her in a group—the manager first, the detective at his heels.

ACROSS the bed lay the body of a man, fully clothed. The bed itself had not been slept in, but the covers had been considerably disturbed, as if the man who lay outside them had tossed and turned intolerably.

Meffat pushed forward slowly and stood beside the bed. The burly detective went around and viewed the body from the other side. He stooped and laid a hand

above the head of the man who lay supine. After a moment he shook his head.

In the doorway, just over the threshold, Blaine Oliver had paused, with Prentiss' arm around her. Her face was pale, her eyes wide and staring. With his free hand Prentiss touched the arm nearest him.

"All right?" he asked solicitously.

"Yes," she gasped. Suddenly she whispered fiercely: "Harry, why did he do it?"

He answered her easily. "Probably ill or something, poor devil! Pay no attention to what that fellow suggested. It may have been perfectly natural."

The manager heard the remark. "It's true," he said, turning. "There's no blood—and no weapon. He's just—er—twisted—as if he was in pain." He glanced appraisingly at the girl in the doorway. "Do you want to—do you feel strong enough to—look at him?"

She advanced slowly, with Prentiss' arm still encircling her, until they stood beside the detective on the far side of the bed. From that position they could look down into the livid face of the dead man.

And suddenly Blaine Oliver cried out in bewilderment and terror.

"It isn't—it isn't—he!" she screamed. "It's—some one else! Harry—that isn't—Horace Trample!"

She collapsed against his shoulder.

Outside the door a quick voice sounded, in conversation with the maid. Then a dapper young man pushed into the chamber and strode rapidly to the bedside.

"What's this, Mr. Meffat?" he asked briskly. "I just came in, and they told me there was a sick man in Ninety-four. He isn't—"

"He's dead," said the manager dryly. "Better pay attention to the young lady, Doctor Merckham. I think she has fainted."

Chapter Two

TO Joseph White, chief of the detective staff of the Mardena, fell the honor of identifying the man who was dead. He performed his task with great dispatch. The dead man was Jordan C. Chambers of New York. Beyond that, no one pretended to know anything about him. He was a guest of the hotel, having registered only the day before. He had been assigned to a room three doors beyond that assigned to Dr. Horace Trample—that is to say, to Room 946—and had been immediately lost in the great maze that is the Hotel Mardena.

White, in point of fact, had seen the man register, but had not troubled to learn his name. The face, therefore, when he looked into it on Dr. Trample's bed, was simply a face he knew—presumably the face of Dr. H. C. Trample, who also had registered at the hotel the day before. Checking, against the register, his memory of the time the man had entered the hotel, it was possible—with two or three eliminations—to arrive at the man's name.

The next step was elementary, and it was made in haste by White, Meffat, and a number of other attaches. They hurried to Room 946, and entered without ceremony. For a moment there was the appearance of another tragedy; then as they shook the huge and drowsy figure in the bed, it stirred, stretched, and ultimately sat up.

"What the devil is the matter?" asked a sleepy voice. "Is the place on fire? Who the devil are you?"

The dark eyes, at once fierce and humorous, opened more widely. They looked with astonishment into the clustered faces of the raiding party; then swung to a little traveling-clock upon the dresser. The clock hands stood exactly at eleven.

"Good God!" shrieked the man in the bed. "Is that the time?"

He flung off the covers and bounded out upon the floor. "Are you Doctor Horace Trample?" Meffat demanded.

The man was flinging himself into his garments at incredible speed, ignoring them completely. At the question, he paused long enough to ask another of his own.

"May I ask you what the devil the idea is—your breaking in this way? Not but what I'm glad you did; but what the devil is it all about?"



BLAINE OLIVER

"We are looking for Doctor Horace Trample," said the manager.

"I am Horace Trample—yes! What is it that you want? Be quick about it, please. I had an engagement for nine o'clock, and it's now eleven. Good God! I can't imagine how I came to oversleep this way!"

MEFFAT was courteous but firm. "If your engagement was with Miss Blaine Oliver," he observed, "it can wait a little longer, Doctor. Miss Oliver is waiting for you in my office."

"The deuce she is! What office? Who are you?"

"I am the manager of this hotel. I am here to ask you by what right you exchanged rooms, last night, with Mr. Jordan Chambers."

The Doctor's face cleared. He slipped his other leg into his trousers and ran his fingers through his hair. "I had forgotten about that," he said. "It's easily explained. What's all the row about? It isn't a criminal offense."

"Mr. Chambers was found dead, in your room, this morning," said White bluntly. "What can you tell us about that? Or do you want us to wait," he sneered, "until you've kept your appointment?"

"Dead!" The Doctor's voice rose sharply. "In my room—but it isn't my room. We exchanged." He frowned and added apologetically: "I'm sorry, of course; but I really didn't know the man. How did it happen?"

The manager shrugged a bit cynically. "We had hoped you might give us some clue," he retorted. "After all, your exchange of rooms was—shall we say, unusual? Such matters are ordinarily handled at the desk."

"I know—I know! It was my fault. He wanted to have the hotel fix it up. I was too sleepy; I wanted to get to bed." The Doctor's eyes swung from the manager to the detective and back again to the manager. "Do you mean you don't know how he died?"

"There seems to be some doubt."

"He was all right last night, as far as I could see. Have you had a physician look at him? Look here—you don't mean that he committed suicide?"

White's heavy growl reëntered the conversation. "He's dead. We don't know what killed him. It could have been suicide, and it could have been natural. What interests us, right now, is how you happened to change rooms with him."

Dr. Horace Trample's arm made a wide gesture. "He asked me to—that's really all there was to it. I had met him at the bar. Somehow he had discovered I was in Room 940. It was a room he had asked for and couldn't get—so he said, anyway; your clerk will be able to verify that perhaps. The room had sentimental associations for him, it appears. He had it on his honeymoon, some years ago. We were a bit sentimental about it, I suppose—over a couple of highballs."

"You say he wanted to go to the desk about it?"

"Sure he did; it was his first suggestion. But I was sleepy and tired. I had had a long day. I wanted to get to bed. The more formal exchange would just have been a nuisance, and nothing was to be gained by it, that I could see. So it appeared to me last night, at any rate. I just picked up my traps and moved into 946, and he moved into 940. I went to bed soon afterward—and slept like a log; as you have observed! It was your excellent liquor, I suppose. I'm not used to it, that good. My God! What does Miss Oliver think has happened to me?"

"She doesn't know yet. She was relieved to find that it wasn't your body in 940."

"She saw the body?" The Doctor was appalled. "It was at her request that we entered the room," said Meffat.

"Inexcusable!" muttered the Doctor. "What must she think of me! I must go to her at once." He began to dress again in furious haste.

"She's with a Mr. Prentiss," continued Meffat.

Fumbling with his tie, in front of a mirror, the Doctor cast a glance at them all, over his shoulder. "Prentiss?" he echoed. "I don't know him." After a moment he asked: "What are you doing with Chambers' body? Did you want me to have a look at it?"

"Our staff physician has seen it; and the police have been notified." The manager's tones were icy. "I suppose a coroner's physician will have to look at it too."

"Undoubtedly. If there is any mystery about it, there may even be an autopsy and an inquest," said the Doctor.

"But I'm willing to be of service, if I can. Having caused you this inconvenience—after a fashion!"

"The police will want a word with you," contributed White, in his rough voice.

"Doubtless," agreed the Doctor. He slipped into his jacket. "Well, I'll be somewhere around."

White entered the arena again: "Did you know this Chambers before you came to this hotel?"

"I never saw him nor heard of him before in my life. Why?"

"You both arrived from New York yesterday; you both registered at this hotel; and—"

"And last night we exchanged rooms," finished the Doctor. "But it's a silly flight of logic you are building, my dear man. If we had known each other, we could have arranged together, in advance, what rooms we were to occupy—always supposing they were to be had. There would have been no necessity for this eleventh-hour exchange."

"Quite true!" interposed Meffat, suavely managerial. "But the circumstances, as you admit, are curious. Chambers' story is not a particularly plausible one. I think you will find the police even more skeptical than we."

"I thought it very plausible indeed," replied the Doctor. "You may be right about the police. But what the devil can they think? That I aided him to commit suicide? If I did, it was unintentional. I gave up a room that he told me had sentimental associations for him. There can't be any great mystery about the matter. If Chambers' door was locked on the inside, he locked it himself. That's plain enough, isn't it? So his death was either suicide or from natural causes."

"Nobody said the door was locked on the inside," growled the hotel detective.

The Doctor's brows met in a frown. "That may be so," he agreed; "but you have conveyed that impression—"

At this instant the door, which had been almost closed, was flung open and three men entered. Two of them were bulky individuals in soft hats and loose light overcoats; the third was the assistant manager.

"These gentlemen are from the Detective Bureau, Mr. Meffat," explained the assistant. "I have told them briefly what has happened; and they have seen the body in 940. The doctor from the coroner's office is in there now." He cast a curious glance at Dr. Horace Trample, nodded casually to the two detectives, and vanished.

Meffat looked around him; the chamber was becoming congested. He nodded, and his own assistants, except for the house detective, reluctantly departed.

"Croach and Brampton," said the Headquarters spokesman. "Your assistant said something about a doctor named Temple, who was missing. What about him?"

"Trample," said the Doctor, speaking for himself. "My name, gentlemen. The lost has just been found."

Meffat hastened to explain. "Doctor Trample and Mr. Chambers—the dead man—exchanged rooms last night. The Doctor has just been telling us about it."

The police detective turned the information over in his mind. "What'd they exchange rooms for?" he asked. He turned his cold blue eyes upon the Doctor and repeated his question: "What'd you exchange rooms for?"

HE listened without emotion to the Doctor's explanation.

"That is the story of my entire connection with the late Mr. Chambers," said the specialist, in conclusion.

Croach grunted. "And you were still sleeping when Mr. Meffat found you," he said after a pause. There was just a suspicion of derision in his voice. He looked at Meffat. "How did you get into the room?"

"Pass-key," answered the manager. "Doctor Trample had not left his key in the lock."

"You weren't drugged, were you?" Croach looked again at the Doctor. "Being a doctor, I suppose you'd know."

"I don't believe so," replied the specialist. "I can't quite imagine it. Being a doctor, as you say, I probably would know."

The police detective made up his mind. "Well, Doctor, I'll have to ask you to tell your story over again, at Headquarters."

"I rather thought that might develop," Trample smiled and shrugged. "All right, I'll go along with you, when you are ready. Present my apologies to Miss Oliver, Mr. Meffat, please. Tell her I am abysmally ashamed."

"Oliver?" echoed the detective. "That's the girl that sounded the alarm. I'd like to have a talk with her myself. Where is she?"

"In my office—waiting for Doctor Trample."

The eyes of the two police detectives met, and the silent Brampton rose. "I'll go down and keep her company," he observed; and tramped out of the room.

THE shifty eyes of his companion swung again to Dr. Horace Trample. "Would you like to have a look at this Chambers, Doctor?"

"If I can be of service, certainly. Do I understand correctly that there may be some mystery about his death? What does your physician think?"

Croach chewed reflectively on an unlighted cigar. "Looks like poison," he said at last. "That in your line?"

"Very much," said the physician. "As a matter of fact, poisons are my specialty. I am a toxicologist." He added: "Then it was suicide!"

Croach shrugged. "Maybe it was," he said. "We don't know anything about it yet."

"Look here," cried the Doctor suddenly. "I was with him in that room, last night—for a little while. We had a final drink together. And this morning I slept until eleven o'clock. You asked me a minute ago if I thought I had been drugged. Confound it, I wonder if I was!"

It sounded a bit like a crawl, to Detective-Sergeant Croach. White, the hotel detective, pricked up his ears. "You didn't say anything to us about being in the room with him," he scowled.

"Didn't I?" retorted the physician. "I said we had exchanged rooms, didn't I? I said he had moved his things into my room, and I had moved mine into his. We had a final drink together, in his room—the one that had been mine; and when I left, I heard him turn the key in the lock."

"What time was that?" asked Croach sharply.

"It was after eleven sometime. It was eleven when we came upstairs."

Meffat ventured suddenly: "There was a card on Chambers' door when we came up, Doctor," he said. "One of those 'Do Not Disturb' cards that hang on the knob, to keep the maid out in the morning. Did you see Chambers put it out?"

Doctor Trample turned the question over in his mind. After a moment he shook his head. "I have no memory of it," he answered. "But he must have hung it out, I suppose, then or shortly afterward. He was going straight to bed."

"Nothing on his mind, in particular?" The question came from Croach.

"To indicate that he might commit suicide? No—nothing whatever. Nothing that emerged in our conversation, anyway. It was all a bit sentimental, as I say. I listened to the story of his honeymoon at least twice, I suppose. While it was all a bit silly, I felt sympathetic."

"Wife dead?"

"I don't recall that he specifically said so; but I assumed that to be the case. Maybe they were only separated; I really don't know."

Croach caressed his jaw with his fingers; he needed a shave. "Well," he said at last, "if you'd like to see the body, Doctor, I've no objections. Since you're an expert on poisons, maybe you can give us a hint."

The party left the room and entered another, three doors along the corridor, where a middle-aged political doctor, somewhat shabby, was bending over the corpse of Jordan Chambers. Merikham, the house physician, was sprawled in a chair, smoking a cigarette.

Dr. Trample went directly to the bed and the coroner's physician moved aside for him. His face was unmoved as he looked at the twisted body of the dead man. "Yes," he said, after a pause, and as if there had been some doubt in his mind, "it's Chambers, all right."

Stooping, he sniffed at the dead man's lips; then pushing up the stiffened eyelids with his thumbs, peered earnestly into the corpse's eyes. He examined as much of the wrists and forearms as was immediately possible. Finally he glanced at the man from the coroner's office. "What would you say it was, Doctor?"

The other shrugged. "If you are a physician, your guess is as good as mine, at this stage," he replied.

"It is better than yours, at any stage," retorted the specialist coolly. "I suggest morphine—in some quantity.

The eyes would seem to indicate it; and it is the easiest drug for the ordinary citizen to obtain." He smiled faintly. "An overdose, perhaps? But it's curious. He didn't look to me like an addict."

Again he examined the wrists and forearms. "I can't find any needle scars—and there appears to be no hypodermic in the room."

Detective-Sergeant Croach reached suddenly beneath a miniature desk and plucked forth a metal waste-basket. He upset it on the floor with a single motion of his hands, and burrowed amid the papers.

"Good shot, Doctor," he said after a few moments. "Here's the container—a tube of quarter-grains, eh? It's empty now."

"Mmm," commented the specialist.

But Croach was tired of beating about the bush.

"And you're a toxicologist yourself," he added. "A poison specialist!" His broad shoulders lifted and fell. "Well, Doctor, if you've seen enough, I have. Let's be on our way."

"Very well," answered the Doctor. He produced a silver cigarette-case, and struck a match.

Then for an instant everybody paused and listened. In the corridor, beyond the closed door, a whistle was heard approaching—the "Habenera," from "Carmen."

Meffat jerked suddenly. "Riley Blackwood!" he exclaimed, as if the name were a profane expletive. "And the Big Boss," he added, "is probably with him." He shrugged. "Just a minute, gentlemen," he continued, holding up a hand. "You are about to witness an exhibition of detective-work that will curl your hair and eyebrows."

Light fingers were tapping now on the door panels; then the doorknob turned.

"Ah, Meffat!" cried the proprietor-in-chief of the Hotel Mardena, entering. "Thought perhaps we'd find you here. Come in, Riley!"

But Mr. Blackwood was already entering the room—a tall, lanky young man, with horn-rimmed spectacles. His eyes, behind their little panes of glass, seemed to survey the room with mingled insolence and amusement.

Mr. Riley Blackwood—in person.

Meffat nodded shortly. He introduced the newcomers to those already in the room.

Then a glassy silence fell upon the company, in the midst of which Riley Blackwood strode to the bedside and looked down upon the corpse of Jordan Chambers.

Chapter Three

WIDDOWSON, principal owner of the Hotel Mardena, was jealous of the high repute of his establishment. In support of his conviction that he was himself an important figure in its personnel, he maintained an extravagant suite upon the premises. He moved in the city's best society, sailed a racing motor-launch in season, was unmarried, and a collector of expensive curios, including women.

One of his enthusiasms was young Mr. Riley Blackwood, that admirable wastrel, who divided his undoubted talents between dramatic criticism and the alluring problems of fantastic crime. He watched Blackwood as the long, angular figure bent across the body of Jordan Chambers on the bed. Six other pairs of eyes also watched.

Young Mr. Blackwood—he was perhaps thirty—straightened.

"Door locked, Mr. Meffat?"

"Yes—by the man himself, undoubtedly. The key was not in the lock, however. There was a card on the door-handle, outside. That card, on the dresser there."

Mr. Blackwood looked at it without emotion. "Better have it dusted for fingerprints," he observed, with a casual glance at Croach.

The official detective stared, then frowned. "I intended to," he replied shortly.

"Two glasses and a whisky-bottle," continued Riley Blackwood easily. "Is it known who the gentleman's visitor was?"

"He has confessed," said Dr. Trample with a smile. "It was I. Would you care to hear my story? I have already told it several times; but I am still in good voice." Mr. Blackwood's sudden grin was not unfriendly. "So you exchanged rooms, Doctor! The possibility had

crossed my mind. I have heard the early history of the —er—episode, from Miss Oliver. And from your assistant," he added, turning upon Meffat: "he told us what he could. Is the Doctor under arrest, Mr. Croach?"

"Certainly not," said Croach. "Merely a bird in the hand, as it were, while your search for the murderer in the bush goes forward!"

The police detective moved uneasily. "Nobody has said anything about murder in this case," he growled. "On the face of it, it's suicide."

"That is true—but you are not revealing all that is in your mind, Sergeant. Of course, you know it *could* be murder, quite as well as I do. A locked door—the 'sealed room' problem—is not proof of suicide where the weapon used is poison."

"Oh, the case against me is very black," insisted Doctor Trample. "I am in point of fact a poison specialist—a toxicologist."

Riley Blackwood offered his cigarette-case. "It may flatter you to hear that I have read a number of your pamphlets," he observed. "I really think, Doctor, that you would be well-advised to tell me your story."

"With pleasure," said the Doctor; and he did so.

Riley Blackwood listened with a sphinx-like not-there-ness that must have been exasperating. His eyes, during the recital, continued to rove about the room in casual examination of its contents.

"Very plausible," he said at last. "Very plausible indeed. And what is your own opinion, Doctor, of the death of Mr. Chambers? I suppose you have one?"

"Suicide or accident," replied the physician promptly. "An overdose of morphine—let us say—taken either by accident or design, Mr. Blackwood."

Mr. Blackwood nodded. "He was undoubtedly in great distress. It is your profession that makes the case particularly awkward for you, of course. You could have furnished him with the means of destruction—hence Mr. Croach's interest in you. Accessory before the fact, perhaps, is the idea that is hazily forming in his mind; not deliberate murder. You deny, of course, that you gave him the stuff that killed him!"

"Oh, of course!" said Blackwood. "When you exchanged rooms, Doctor, you moved *everything* of yours into the other room?"

"As far as I know, yes. In fact, I am certain of it." "Then those binoculars which I see on the side-table were Chambers'? Not yours, by any chance?"

The eyes of the curious men were turned upon the indicated glasses. Dr. Trample seemed puzzled.

"They are not mine, certainly," he replied. "Therefore, presumably, they were Chambers'. I didn't notice them last night."

"And they were not mentioned, I gather. Probably they had not been unpacked. But why under the canopy should Chambers have required a pair of binoculars? At eleven o'clock at night! Why, for that matter, was he traveling with them at all? The racing season is about over, I think, in these parts."

"H'm! But there are other 'parts,' Riley, after all." Widdowson's suggestion was tentative. "For all we know, he may have been going South."

"True enough—but the glasses are not in their case. The case is there—on the floor—where he dropped it. It is a fair assumption that the glasses were in use."

"Cleaning them, perhaps?" Mr. Blackwood shrugged. "Well, well! It may not be important. But you might dust them for fingerprints, also, Mr. Croach, if the idea appeals to you. You will find, I think, that only Chambers used them."

"There'll be a squad over here before long," Croach said. "And a camera man. I'll see to that."

Riley Blackwood continued his casual cross-examination. "When you left this room, last night, Doctor, in what condition did you leave the late Mr. Chambers? He had been garrulous, as you have suggested; but was he drunk?"

"N-no, I think not. No more than I was. We had had perhaps half a dozen drinks in all. They were fairly

stiff. Neither of us was reeling, if that is what you mean. I suspect our tongues were a trifle thick."

"You did not at any time suspect that Chambers might be an addict?"

"Certainly not! I don't believe that now. If he had been, he would probably have used a needle. There's none around."

"None in sight, would perhaps be the police view of it," smiled Blackwood. "He didn't mention drugs to you, however, in any way, shape or manner?"

"He did not."

"Do you carry anything of the sort around with you?"

"Not often. I have none at present."

"And you had none last night?"

"I had not. When I require anything of the sort, I can always get it. I had no reason to think that I would need it. I have a syringe, of course."

"You came here merely to attend yesterday's medical convention?"

"That is all. The convention, however, lasts for a week. I planned to stay through."

"Are you acquainted with a Mr. Harry Prentiss—Miss Oliver's friend?"

Dr. Trample smiled and shook his head. "I had never heard of the young man until a little while ago."

"His appearance, this morning, struck me as being a trifle fortuitous, that was all." Riley Blackwood smiled in his turn.

"Very," agreed the Doctor. "I'm damned glad of it, speaking for myself, Mr. Blackwood. I hope he got the poor girl something to eat."

Mr. Blackwood returned to his lazy attack. "This Chambers, Doctor—did he appear to you as somewhat of a melancholy fellow?"

"No—rather the contrary, I should say. But the liquor may have accounted for that. He was *eager*—eager to tell me his story; then grateful—grateful to me for giving up my room to him. I don't think I noticed any melancholy."

"Did you tell him that you were a physician?"

"I believe I did—after he had asked me."

"Did he mention his own line?"

"I don't recall that he did. I don't believe I asked him."

"Is that the bottle out of which you poured liquor, last night?"

"It is the bottle out of which he poured liquor," corrected the Doctor. "That or one just like it, anyway."

"It's quite empty," commented Riley Blackwood significantly.

"Yes, so it is. By Jove!" exploded the Doctor. "I see what you are getting at! He must have done a lot of drinking after I left him! The drinking we did together, for the most part, was at the bar. We had only one drink, here in this room, before I left."

"Odd, isn't it?" said Riley Blackwood. "The ginger-ale bottle is also empty. Are those the shoes you were wearing last night, Doctor?"

"Uh? Yes—of course."

"May I see the soles of them?"

Dr. Trample sat down, laughing; for some time he had been leaning idly against a chair-back. He thrust forth first one foot and then the other, while Blackwood inspected his soles.

RILEY Blackwood grinned cheerily. "Right-o, Doctor! You may put your feet down. By the way, which chair did you occupy last night?"

The Doctor considered. "This one," he said at length. "And Chambers sat *there*, facing me."

"The chairs are much as they were?"

"Almost precisely, I should say. The table, too."

"That's fortunate. And strange, considering the herd of trained elephants that has been let loose in here. Well, it's a small indication, perhaps; but this second glass appears to be just a little out of reach of either chair. It is as if some one sitting in this third chair—now occupied by Doctor Merkhamp—had set it down. You haven't touched it, have you, Doctor?"

The dapper house physician looked offended. "I haven't touched anything but the body since I came into the room," he said. "Nor has anybody else, except yourself and Sergeant Croach."



TONY WIDDOWSON

"And I have been very careful," smiled Riley Blackwood. "Now with reference to soles: I am glad to note that none of you gentlemen who have tramped up this room has mud upon his shoes. Nor has the late Mr. Chambers!" He cast a negligent glance at the figure on the bed. "Yet under Doctor Merkhams's chair is a small patch of mud—quite dry—that obviously has dropped from some one's sole. It is about the size of a twenty-five-cent piece. Imbedded in its center, unless my eyes deceive me, is a black speck that I suspect to be a cinder."

Detective-Sergeant Croach crossed the room in two swift strides and knelt beside the chair in question. His voice, however, when he spoke, was deprecating.

"Well, you're right about that, anyway. But what's it prove?"

"Nothing whatever," said Riley Blackwood. "It is perhaps suggestive."

Meffat spoke with a certain asperity. "If you mean it may have been there for weeks, Mr. Blackwood," he said, "I don't agree with you. This room was thoroughly cleaned after the last tenant left it."

"Still," said Mr. Blackwood, "it could have been overlooked. It's not impossible. What I was really suggesting, however, is that it may have been dropped there no longer ago than last night. It may have been dropped there by Chambers himself, for all that his soles are now quite clean. And it may have been dropped there by somebody who has not yet entered the circle of our knowledge."

Croach turned a baleful eye upon the specialist, and Trample responded to the unspoken accusation.

"No," said the doctor, "I didn't lie, Sergeant. These are the shoes I wore last night, and all day yesterday. I came and went in taxicabs, and had no opportunity to step in mud or cinders."

"But you've got another pair of shoes?"

"I am the fortunate possessor of three other pairs of shoes," replied the Doctor pleasantly. "All of them are open to your inspection."

Riley Blackwood shrugged and yawned. "Please don't be silly," he implored. "What I am suggesting is the possibility of a stranger."

He turned to the coroner's physician. "How long has Chambers been dead, Doctor?"

"From eleven to twelve hours, perhaps."

"That is, since twelve or one o'clock last night. Do you agree to that, Doctor Trample?"

"Yes, I think so. It is difficult to be exact."

"What is the lethal dose of morphine, Doctor?"

The specialist shrugged. "It depends upon the individual. Half a grain might kill a delicate woman. Two grains might kill any healthy adult, unused to opiates. Under the influence of custom, however, large quantities may be taken."

"I see. And what would be the symptoms of a lethal dose?"

"Well, they would begin to manifest themselves in about half an hour, I should say, the time depending of course upon the dose. Giddiness at first, then drowsiness, and finally stupor. Insensibility ensues fairly quickly. The patient appears to be sleeping soundly. As the poisoning progresses, the breathing becomes slow and stertorous, the pulse weak and feeble, the countenance livid. The eyes are closed, and the pupils are frequently contracted—sometimes almost to a pinpoint; they are insensible to the stimulus of light. In some cases the skin is cold; in others it is bathed in perspiration."

WHITE, the house detective, his eyes upon the body of Jordan Chambers, was checking the Doctor's information against the appearance of the corpse.

"I see," said Riley Blackwood again. "No possibility of rousing such a patient as you suggest, Doctor, once the drug has begun to get in its work?"

"A loud noise might perhaps rouse him for an instant, but the relapse would be almost immediate."

"And death, at last, comes peacefully!" Mr. Blackwood was piously sententious.

Dr. Trample smiled. "Not always; it is occasionally preceded by convulsions."

"H'm! It is a little strange that Chambers made no effort to summon help. There must have been a few minutes before the pains seized him—in which he might have grabbed a telephone. Were you in the hotel last night, Doctor Merkhams?"

The house physician blinked. "Yes, I was—after one o'clock, at any rate. I live here, you know."

Young Mr. Blackwood drummed his fingers on his knee. "And yet," he mused, "he would probably have called on Doctor Trample first."

"I think he had no idea he was dying," said the specialist. "Anyway, until it was too late to try to save himself. He had been drinking, remember; and his inclination would be to ascribe any stomach difficulties to what he had consumed. That would be the case if death was the result of accident. Of course, if this is a case of suicide—" He shrugged.

"He would know precisely what was happening to him, and would be unlikely to call for help, you mean. Exactly!" said Riley Blackwood. "Was the room next door to Chambers' occupied last night, Mr. Meffat?"

The manager was thoughtful. "Was it, White? Upon my soul, I don't know. But it can easily be discovered. I suppose it was, since—if we are to believe Doctor Trample—Chambers'd wanted Room 940 but had to take 946. If Room 942 had been unoccupied, he might have been willing to compromise and take that. I'll go into the whole matter with the clerk who talked to him."

"Please do! And it would be interesting to discover whether the occupant of Room 942 heard anything after midnight. Or, for that matter, the occupant of Room 938. That sort of thing is rather in Mr. Croach's line, I think."

"Yeh," said Mr. Croach dryly. "You can leave all that to me. In fact, you can leave the whole investigation to me, after you get tired of asking questions. After all, I've got to earn my salary." He grinned at Riley Blackwood. "That's not such a bad line you got, young fella!"

"All thanks for your approval," murmured Blackwood. "I now retire to luncheon and reflection. Don't overlook any bets. This room must be thick with fingerprints—not all of them Doctor Trample's and Mr. Chambers'. There was a bellboy here, last night; he left these glasses—and before the advent of Chambers there was a maid. It will be a case of too many fingerprints before we are through with it. But I doubt that you will learn much from the fingerprints. Probably the murderer wore gloves. I commend you to the binoculars! Yes, and the little patch of mud. With those clues, Sergeant, you should make a name for yourself."

He uncoiled his long length from the chair in which he had been sprawling and stalked majestically out of the chamber, followed by the delighted Widdowson. In an instant he had returned. A faint grin hovered about the corners of his lips. The others looked at him amazedly.

"By the way," said Mr. Blackwood casually, "are any of you familiar with the card-and-glass trick? It's very simple and highly instructive. I dislike to use one of these tumblers which may be required in evidence. Perhaps there is another. Ah, this will do."

He strolled into the bathroom as he spoke, ran the water for a moment into the basin, and emerged with an ordinary tumbler borrowed from the bathroom fixtures. He set it carefully upon the small liquor-table.

"That is a handsome diamond you are wearing, Doctor. May I see it for a moment?" He extended his hand for the brilliant ring worn by Merkhams, the hotel physician, who drew it off in astonishment. "Thank you!" And Blackwood dropped the glittering bauble into his own waistcoat pocket.

His right hand explored the side pocket of his jacket and brought forth a deck of cards. "I am a little out of practice," he apologized; "but I believe I can still place these cards, one at a time, wherever you would like them placed. Bear in mind, please, that the quickness of the hand deceives the eye. That is proverbial. Now what about this ace of spades? Have any of you any choice?"

Trample burst into a roar of laughter, quickly subdued. Meffat cleared his throat angrily.



KITTY MOCKE

"Really, Riley!" protested Widdowson, "at this time—ah—is this really necessary?"

"Suppose we say the window-cornice, then," Mr. Blackwood was undisturbed. "It is sufficiently difficult," he added, "and, as I say, I am somewhat out of practice. However—"

He drew back his arm and with a gentle toss sent the ace of spades fluttering upward toward the corner of the window-top. It alighted as easily as a bird on the designated spot.

"Bull's-eye!" said Blackwood in triumph. "With a drink of whisky—even a glass of water—I could do it fifty-two times, hand-running. However, ten should be enough to prove my point."

Again his arm drew back; and again, and again. Ten cards he flung easily toward the ceiling, and each alighted gently on the designated ledge above the window.

"Very pretty," commented Mr. Blackwood. "The quickness of the hand deceives the eye. It's just a trick, of course. Any one of you could do it with a little practice. Thank you for your attention, and once again good-by."

He dropped the balance of the pack of cards carelessly onto the low table and turned to the door.

"Pardon," said Dr. Merham acidly, "but if your idea was to make off with my ring, you've failed. May I have it back?"

"You have it back," said Riley Blackwood. "At least, it is in the glass of water, on the table in front of you. May I take it that seven pairs of eyes failed to see me drop it there? That is a tribute to my skill that I appreciate. It would have been just as easy with a tube of morphine. Sorry to have been so dramatic. Life, as some one has remarked, is like a pack of cards. I have forgotten the precise argument; but the aphorism, I think, is sound. Good luck to you, Doctor Trample! If Crouch & Company fail you, look me up."

He vanished around the corner of the door, leaving behind him an almost visible sense of his mocking, shadowy smile.

Chapter Four

IN private, Mr. Riley Blackwood was less of a *poseur* than his numerous acquaintances imagined. He was, indeed, a serious-minded youth, who dropped his cloak of moly when he entered his apartment and closed the door behind him. For one thing, it pleased him to think that the public didn't really understand him; and for another, there was always the possibility that his aunt would be upon the premises: she occupied the adjoining suite. For that formidable old bluestocking Blackwood entertained a high respect—just faintly touched with apprehension. Sometimes they discussed together such clamorous and timely problems as the mystery of Dickens' "Edwin Drood" and the influence of Ibsen on the English drama. Her own influence was chastening and salutary. "My nephew," Julie Blackwood told her intimates, "has a good mind, if only he would learn to use it." Thus the colorful public reputation of Riley Blackwood, the brilliant young critic of the *Morning Chronicle*, tripped and fell on his own doersill. It was as well for Blackwood, for it kept his egotism within bounds and helped to humanize him.

His flair for mystery—and its solution—was his principal enthusiasm, and it was genuine. And his passion for justice, while less a reasoned conviction than a literary tradition, was sincere enough. He was an impatient observer of the human comedy, and frequently a bitter commentator.

A trifle ashamed of his theatricality, now that it was over, young Mr. Blackwood took leave of his admiring friend early in the afternoon and hastened toward his rooms in the Pomander Mansions, where his aunt, a Chinese servant and a terrier would be awaiting him. Tea with Miss Blackwood—twice a week—was a rite as well as a ritual, and not lightly to be dismissed.

It would be as well, he reflected, to say nothing immediately about the body in the hotel bedroom. His aunt would only ask questions; and he had a column of stage gossip to turn out, at the office, before dinner. Tea would be served in the living-room, and the scene from the windows—as usual—would remind Miss Blackwood of the Bay of Naples—a safer and less protracted subject, and one in which he knew his cues.

He lightly kissed his aunt upon the cheek and apologized for being late. "I've had a fairly busy morning," he explained. "Tony Widdowson sends you his devotion. How are you, Aunt Julie?"

The ancient maiden lady sniffed. "You and your Tony Widdowson and your blarney!" she retorted. "I'm well enough," she added, and lifted the silver teapot in her thin white fingers. "Pass me your cup, Johnny," ordered Miss Juliet Blackwood; and John Riley Blackwood passed up his cup like a little gentleman.

It had been that way as far back as he could remember; and Riley Blackwood hoped that it would always be that way. But it inclined him to a certain recklessness in other quarters.

MISS BLAINE OLIVER, in the meantime, released by the hotel and the police, drove slowly southward along the Outer Drive, toward the home of a friend with whom she might discuss the startling developments of her own morning. Her home, in Evanston, was quite the other way; but she had need of conversation.

Her mind was on the difficulties of Horace Trample. Was it not remotely conceivable—just conceivable—that he knew more than he had told about the death of the mysterious stranger? It was not that she believed him guilty of murder; she didn't. On the face of it, the man in the hotel had committed suicide, poor devil! But in her secret heart of hearts, Miss Oliver was convinced that Horace Trample had aided him to do it.

"If he doesn't call," she told her friend, when the exciting story had been related, "I don't think I shall be able to stand it."

Miss Clelia Mason looked back at her with speculative eyes. "What does he look like?" she pertinently asked.

Blaine Oliver told her. "He's bigger than he used to be," she finished; "but otherwise he hasn't changed a bit."

Miss Mason was not greatly impressed. "He sounds enchanting," she lied. . . .

Dr. Trample, meanwhile, was keeping his temper with some difficulty. He was too important a citizen, however, to be bullied like a taxi-driver, and in time the ordeal with the police was over. He gave his solemn word that he would not attempt to leave the city without permission, and returned to the Mardena to await developments.

A light knock fell upon his door. It was Widdowson. "Well, Doctor, they told me downstairs that you were back. Hope the ordeal wasn't too awful! Our masterminds are frequently pretty nasty, I believe." His smile widened. "You seem unscarred, at any rate."

"Oh, yes! They didn't beat me up!" The Doctor also smiled. "Tired me out a bit, that's all."

"You've an apology coming to you," said Widdowson frankly. "Speaking for the Mardena, we're damned sorry."

"Even White? And Meffat?"

Widdowson grinned. "They appear to be satisfied that you were just an innocent bystander. The clerk who received Chambers has testified that Chambers *did*, as a matter of fact, ask for Room 940—and seemed distressed when he couldn't get it."

"I see. But how did he find out who had it? Or did your clerk tell him that too?"

"He says not. If I thought he did, I'd fire him." Widdowson frowned. "No, it would be simple enough, you know. He watched the box numbered 940, I suppose, until you came along and called for your key."

"When I came in after the afternoon session, that would be." Trample nodded. "Then he waited until he found me at the bar, and told his little tale."

Widdowson agreed. "It was suicide, of course. In the room where he'd been happiest, eh? Insane perhaps, but understandable. Not nice for the hotel; but there's nothing we can do about it now. Look here, Doctor; I didn't come to bother you about Chambers. I came to speak my little piece. Blackwood's dining with me tonight. Will you join us?"

"To tell the truth," replied the Doctor, faintly embarrassed, "I've another engagement with Miss Oliver. Naturally, I'd like to keep this one! I was about to call her up."

"Possibly Miss Oliver would join us also." The Doctor thought it over. "All right," he said. "Why not?"

"That's fine," said Widdowson. "Shall we say seven

o'clock, then? In my rooms? They're on the third floor. Fine! I'll tell Riley, and we'll get a couple of actresses."

"Good Lord!" cried the Doctor. "What for?"

"For Riley and me," said Widdowson. "Oh, it will all be perfectly respectable. Don't worry about that!"

He hustled out of the room, and Dr. Horace Trample focused his attention on the telephone.

Miss Oliver thought the arrangement an excellent one, and they dined at seven, as arranged. The actresses, however, did not materialize. It developed that Blackwood had objected.

"Widdowson thinks that no dinner is complete without an actress," he explained. "It's what comes of owning hotels. But crime fascinates me more than do actresses. I've been looking forward to a chat with you, Miss Oliver. You had a box seat for this curious performance. I should be interested to hear your impressions."

"I fainted," said Blaine Oliver.

"I know; it was a very significant action. But I imagine you have some opinion about the case?"

"I think Mr. Chambers committed suicide," she answered at length. "But you used the word 'crime'. Do you mean you don't think so?"

"I haven't any final opinion yet," said Blackwood. "The police, I suspect, think that our friend the Doctor either murdered Chambers or helped him commit suicide. But there are other alternatives. Somebody else may have murdered Chambers or helped him to commit suicide. There is, also, of course, the simplest solution of them all—that Chambers committed suicide without help from anybody. It is true that he left none of the customary notes explaining a suicide. But he may have mailed them—or omitted writing them. But it is most unlikely that his death was accidental."

She nodded. "I suppose so! I mean, I suppose it wasn't accidental."

An idea occurred to her; she believed it to be an inspiration. She spun toward Blackwood in some excitement. "Could Doctor Trample have been drugged himself? After all—"

"After all, he was a long time in waking up," smiled Blackwood. "We've considered the possibility, Miss Oliver. Well, that depends on whether Chambers was murdered or committed suicide."

"He committed suicide," declared Widdowson.

Riley Blackwood grinned. "That's the hotel point of view, I realize. Still, a man might manage to get himself murdered, Tony, even in the Hotel Mardena. Miss Oliver's question goes rather to the heart of things. Was the Doctor doped, or wasn't he? If he was, it seems likely enough that Chambers committed suicide. If he was not, it's possible to build a very plausible argument for murder."

"I don't follow you," said the Doctor.

"If Chambers committed suicide, he may have thought it worth while to insure you a comfortable slumber. For all he knew, you might take it into your head to return to the room—perhaps for something you had forgotten; perhaps because you suspected his intention. I mean, he wouldn't care to be interrupted."

"And if I was not drugged, it follows that Chambers was murdered?"

"Not inevitably; but the indications, in that case, are obviously stronger. A murderer would have no valid reason to drug you, unless he thought you had knowledge of his plans; and the chances are against his knowing anything about you. In any case, how could he have done it? You could have been drugged only while you were having that last drink with Chambers. There was no potential murderer in the room with you, at that time, if I have not been misinformed."

Trample laughed. "Very plausible and ingenious," he said. "And I don't believe I was drugged. To that extent I must support your argument."

"Murder it is, then," declared Riley Blackwood.

"Not in this hotel," said Widdowson firmly. "It's a dirty enough break to have a suicide."

THE dinner proceeded, and Miss Oliver continued to be puzzled. She felt a vague distrust of Riley Blackwood. One of his remarks kept coming back to her. At length she reverted to it.

"Just what was the significance of my fainting, Mr. Blackwood?"

"Ah!" said Mr. Blackwood. "That is the question, isn't it? Why did you faint, Miss Oliver?"

"Oh, come off it, Riley," protested Widdowson. "You know you're only showing off."

MR. BLACKWOOD seemed pained. "You think I am accusing Miss Oliver?" he asked. "Quite the contrary! I simply suggest that in a detached consideration of the problem of the late Mr. Chambers' death, Miss Oliver's connection with Doctor Trample is one of the early question-marks. She had an appointment with him that he was unable to keep. It was she who first expressed fear that something had happened to him, and led the search-party to his room. She has just told us that she expected the body to be that of Doctor Trample; and she fainted when she discovered it was not. Whatever I may think of the episode, you may bet your final dollar that the police are wondering whether Miss Oliver was preparing an ingenious sort of alibi."

"That's nonsense," snapped the Doctor.

The young woman decided to conduct her own defense. "I'm really not that clever," she said; "but let it go. Assume that you are right. What about Mr. Chambers?"

"He complicates the case," admitted Blackwood. "Of course, he might have been the instrument of your vengeance! You sent him to murder Doctor Trample, let us say; but Trample turned the tables on him. That covers the facts, and accounts for your very natural faith when you discovered that your hellish plans had gone awry."

The Doctor had recovered his good humor. "Now I'm the murderer again!" he said. "I hope the police imagination is less ingenious than yours, Blackwood. By the way, what was the significance of those field-glasses?"

"They are probably the key to the mystery," said Blackwood. "I hope to know more about them by tomorrow. Tonight, in fact."

"Which reminds me," broke in Widdowson hurriedly, "we've got another party on, tonight. Hope you don't object, Riley! Cope Heviland called me up a little while ago, and made me promise that if the rain stopped we'd join him on a cruise. Small party, I believe, but very select. He's entertaining that English traveler-fellow—Ford something! Halderness—Ford Halderness! They're dining at Heviland's and we're to join them about nine-thirty. I told him we had a party of our own, and he said to bring 'em along." He looked apologetically at Miss Oliver and the Doctor. "You'll go, won't you?"

"A cruise?" Miss Oliver shuddered.

"On Heviland's yacht. We won't go far. Up around the Fair grounds, to look at the lights, and back again to Belmont Harbor. Come on, Riley! Don't be a detective all the time."

"All right," grumbled Blackwood ungraciously. "But I want to be back by midnight, Tony—anyway, by one o'clock."

Widdowson telephoned the Heviland apartment, when they had finished dinner, and reported back to Blackwood. "Heviland says they're starting in a few minutes. He wants us to join him at the harbor. We'll pick up a taxi and drive over to the garage for my car."

Blackwood collected his coat and stick, but he did not go directly to the lobby; instead he caught an elevator going upward, and disembarked at the ninth floor. From his pocket he brought up the key to Room 940, and after making certain he was not observed, let himself in.

The body of Chambers, of course, had been removed; but otherwise the place was much as he had left it earlier in the day. No maid had been admitted to clean up. Certain of Chambers' belongings also had been removed, including, he noted, the binoculars—whatever might offer a possibility of fingerprints.

For some minutes he moved softly about the room, touching nothing, his lips puckered in a soundless whistle. Then he moved leisurely to the door, snapped off the lights, opened and closed the door as if in departure, and in the darkness strode swiftly back to the windows.

Very gently he moved the hangings and peered out. Immediately across the street bulked the great mass of the Hotel Jamaica, the Mardena's nearest rival. Here and there in its exposed facade a window showed a square of light, but for the most part the rooms were still in darkness. He waited patiently for several minutes. From his pocket, after a time, he produced a small but powerful pair of opera-glasses and focused them upon the building opposite.

At length he returned the glasses to his pocket and left the room. He descended swiftly to the lobby and joined the others of his party who were waiting for him on the pavement outside.

In Widdowson's big car, speeding northward along the border of the lake, Miss Oliver's curiosity got the better of her.

"Why do we have to get back by one o'clock, Mr. Blackwood? I mean, does it have anything to do with this case?"

"I, not we," said Mr. Blackwood. "I plan to spend the night in the room occupied by the late Mr. Chambers."

"But why?" she persisted. "What can you expect to find?"

"I may even invite the Doctor to sit up with me," continued Blackwood pleasantly. "There is a little experiment I want to make."

Trample nodded. "Glad to, if I can be of service," he assented. "You said the door was locked, Blackwood; and of course it was. But how about the windows? I've been wondering about them."

"Nine floors up from the street, for one thing," growled Widdowson, from his seat beside the chauffeur. "And I can't quite see anybody crawling from one room to another across the face of the building."

"It could be done," said Riley Blackwood. "By a very agile fellow. One of the windows was locked, Doctor; the other unlocked and slightly open. But the windows have no bearing on the actual murder. The murderer entered by the door, at Chambers' invitation, and was later ushered out by Chambers. Mr. Chambers, you see, didn't know he had been poisoned."

Widdowson was glum. "Have it your own way," he murmured. "Here's Belmont Harbor, anyway!"

Lights danced on the waters of the little yacht harbor, and from the farther shore, where the motor-launches were moored, came the tinkling strains of music. They swung into a strip of parkway, turned eastward toward the lake, then doubled back to the north along the peninsula that formed the eastern shore of the harbor.

Hevland and his guests already had arrived. On board the *Flying Fish* a radio was blaring, and dancing had already begun.



RILEY BLACKWOOD

Chapter Five

"CHICAGO'S reputation for violence has always interested me; but I am beginning to wonder if it is deserved. I have been among you now for two days, and—upon my soul—I haven't seen a single murder!"

Ford Halderness laughed his pleasant, patronizing laugh, quite unaware that every contemporary European visitor before him had uttered the same witticism. "Give you my word!" he added brightly.

Blaine Oliver showed her pretty teeth in a smile. "Not even a very little one, Mr. Halderness," she questioned. "We must really see what we can do for you, I think. I understand it's possible, in almost any of our neighborhoods, to get a throat cut for a dollar and a quarter."

"Jolly!" said Mr. Halderness. "From ear to ear, Miss Oliver?"

"We advertise 'em," said Riley Blackwood dryly. "As a result, you hear about them."

"Heard some shots, though, last night," proclaimed the Briton. "I'm at Mrs. Melton's, you know; my window's right on the boulevard. Sounded like a revolution! I bounded out of bed, expecting to find a barricade before the boue." He spread his hands in humorous bewilderment. "Nothing! Thought I had been dreaming."

Widdowson laughed. "Roving squad-car shooting at suspicious speeders," he said. "Suspicious speeders maybe shooting back. They'd be out of sight before you could reach the window, Mr. Halderness. It's just a game between the minor gangsters and the police."

"Speaking of murder, Widdowson," said Hevland, "the papers reported a man found dead in the Mardena. Nothing sensational in that, I hope?"

The Mardena's owner made a grimace. "So do I," he answered heartily. "Riley's trying to persuade us it's a

mystery; but the police have more sense, I think. Suicide's bad enough."

The *Flying Fish* was approaching the Fair grounds. Steaming slowly, it bore down upon the scene of carnival. Red, blue and yellow lights wavered across the water, and the sky was a canvas of flaming modernistic color. The confused murmur of thousands of voices was borne to them on the light breeze, punctuated at intervals by the crash and din of bands playing in the several casinos.

The dancers halted their shuffling feet and pushed toward the rail; the idlers who had been sitting aft went forward. There was a general rearrangement of groups, in the midst of which a tall young man, bolder a cravenette around his evening garments, uttered a sudden exclamation.

"Blaine!" he said, in tones of pleased surprise. "What the dickens! I didn't dream of finding you on board."

It was Harry Prentiss, whom she had last seen at luncheon.

She gave him her hand. "What a fortuitous person you are, Harry!" she smiled. "When you spoke, I had a nightmarish sensation that it was all beginning over again. Have you met Mr. Halderness?"

But Halderness had been swept away by another group of voyagers; he was nowhere to be seen. Neither was Widdowson or Hevland. So she introduced Blackwood and the Doctor.

Prentiss stared at Horace Trample with great interest. "Glad to see you alive and well, sir," he observed. "For a little while, this morning, you had me frightened!"

Trample was only slightly embarrassed. "I think," he said, "you are the last remaining person to whom I owe an apology. And I'm grateful to you for standing by Miss Oliver. I hope you know what happened. To tell the truth, I'm a little tired of talking about it."

"Mysterious case," said Prentiss lightly. He turned to Blaine Oliver. "I didn't know you knew this particular group, Blaine."

"I don't," she retorted. "It came about through Mr. Widdowson. I don't know him either, really; so figure it out. And be very careful—Mr. Blackwood has turned detective!"

"Good Lord!" exclaimed Prentiss. "What are you detecting tonight, Mr. Blackwood—if it isn't a secret? Have you found any clues?"

Blackwood decided to be affable. "Miss Oliver is having a great deal of fun at my expense," he replied. "I was faintly interested in the case of Chambers because he died in Widdowson's hotel; that's all. Since you are here, do you mind if I ask you a question?"

"Not at all. Please do ask one!"

"What were you doing in the Mardena when you met Miss Oliver, this morning?"

Prentiss laughed. "That's pointed enough," he commented. "I was doing precisely nothing. That is to say, I was passing through the lobby. It was raining, as you know; I took a shortcut—or intended to—from one street to another, through the hotel. On the way, I ran into Blaine. She was in some distress."

Riley Blackwood nodded. "That's all," he said.

Prentiss drew up a chair and sat down. "That's that, then," he said. "Throw me out, if I intrude! The Fair looks rather attractive from the water, doesn't it? I shouldn't mind being a stockholder! By the way, have any of you met this odd bouncer, Crotz?"

"Crotz?" Blaine Oliver echoed the name idly.

"Gene Crotz, I think he's called. Now if you had told me he was a detective, I'd have believed you! Short, stocky fellow, with a pair of shoulders. I wondered who he was. Looks a bit out of his element; and I thought his tails were bothering him."

"Well, he didn't come with us," said Miss Oliver. "I haven't seen him."

A little later Prentiss rose. "Dot Harvey will be looking for me," he said. "Happy to have made your acquaintance, Mr. Blackwood. Good luck, Doctor!" To Blaine Oliver he said: "I'm driving north with Dorothy, when we get back; but I suppose you are already provided with transportation."

She glanced tentatively at the Doctor. "Thanks, yes. Doctor Trample will see that I get home all right."

Prentiss nodded and moved away.

THE Flying Fish, meanwhile, had reached the farthest southern extremity of the Fair grounds and was coming about for the return cruise. Horace Trample stood up and stretched his huge body.

"I'll have a look at the thing from the rail," he said. "Last chance, perhaps, to see it from the water." He moved away in the semi-darkness, leaving Blaine Oliver and Blackwood alone together.

For some time they carried on a desultory conversation. Then the subject of Jordan Chambers' death inevitably returned.

"I don't think Mr. Chambers was murdered at all," said Miss Oliver with decision.

"I should like to be able to agree with you," said Blackwood.

She regarded him for a time from under half-closed eyelids. "Why do you do this sort of thing at all?" she asked at last. "In a sense, it isn't any of your business."

"It's everybody's business, isn't it?" he retorted, but without conviction. "Murder is a fairly serious matter. However, that isn't the answer. I've that kind of a mind, that's all. A mystery fascinates me; I—"

He stopped short. A heavy splash had sounded in the water, somewhere up ahead; it was followed by a piercing scream. Then a confused babble of voices arose, in the thick of which a powerful single voice was raised in a sudden shout of, "Man overboard!" A bell rang sharply, and the *Flying Fish* seemed to pause on her course and shudder. The yacht's engines slowed and stopped; along her sides the hiss of water ceased, and was succeeded by an alarming and momentous silence.

Riley Blackwood sprang to his feet and hurried forward, and vanished around a corner of the cabin. As quickly as she could, Blaine Oliver followed him.

The yacht rolled easily in the long swell of the lake. Half a mile off the port bow stretched the fantastic colored skyline of the Century of Progress exposition. And clustered at the starboard rail were half the company of guests, with the other half pushing at them from behind. Their voices were excited but subdued.

Blaine Oliver clutched at the nearest sleeve. "Who is it?" she breathlessly inquired.

"Don't know yet," said the man addressed.

With some difficulty she forced a passage to the rail, and peered downward at the water. She half expected to see a drowned face float past on the crest of one of the black waves, but on that side of the yacht there was only cold, dark water.

Some sailors were wrestling with a small-boat, endeavoring to launch it. Some one was shouting orders at the wheel-man. "Bring her head around and use the searchlight," called a powerful voice that she recognized as Heviland's. Again a bell rang sharply, twice; the engines throbbed slowly; the propeller began to thrash. At that instant, in the pressure at the bow, she heard with relief the voice of Horace Trample: "He's well astern by this time, I'm afraid. No use looking for him where he went in!"

That was Heviland's idea, also, it was obvious. The *Flying Fish* once more was turning on her course. Her nose was pointed southward again. The exposition's noise and color was on her starboard bow. A small searchlight was pointing a path upon the water. The yacht cruised slowly.

She heard the voice of Horace Trample again, raised in excitement: "There he is!" It cried. "I see him, Blackwood! No, he's gone again." The words were followed by another splash in the water, and for an instant Blaine's heart sank. Then she was scrambling through the crush of watchers in the bow, with some wild notion of rescue in her mind, for she was an excellent swimmer, and she had heard the Doctor remark that he could not swim a stroke.

But it was Trample himself against whom she brought up at length; he glanced at her without emotion. "Hello," he said calmly enough. "We've just spotted the fellow,

I think. Blackwood's gone in after him. The light picked him out for a moment, and then he vanished."

"Who is it?" she asked again.

"Nobody appears to know," replied the Doctor. "Funny! Nobody seems to be missing."

Their eyes scanned the water. Somewhere out and beyond they could hear the flailing strokes of Riley Blackwood, but he was not visible in the path of light. He was swimming rapidly, and he seemed to be swimming outward. The sounds of his passage became indistinct, and then appeared to cease entirely. The Doctor's eyes were anxious.

"Don't worry about Riley," spoke up Widdowson. "He swims like a fish. Wish we were in my motor-launch!"

It was some minutes, however, before a muffled hail came to them across the water. The yacht's nose swung offshore following the sound.

The hail was repeated from the darkness. "Keep your head the way she is, Heviland," called the voice of Riley Blackwood. "Come ahead slowly. Don't run me down!"

"Got him?" roared Heviland.

"Got him," answered the voice across the water, like an echo.

Quite suddenly Blaine saw the swimmer. He was swimming slowly, using only one arm, and he was towing something behind him. In a few moments there were scrambling sounds along the ladder, and the Doctor spoke again. "All right, Blackwood," he said. "Look out for the ship's side!"

For an instant she saw again the twisted body of the man Chambers sprawled across the bed. Now another body was coming up the side! A shudder shook her, and she pushed free of the groups that lined the rail, returned to the after-deck and sat down in the chair she had deserted. After a moment she lighted a cigarette and peered closely at her watch. It was only eleven-thirty.

She smiled faintly. There was still time for Blackwood to conduct his "experiment" at the Mardena.

It was one upon twelve-thirty, however, before anyone came near her—except a steward, from whom she gratefully accepted a whisky. Then Ford Halderness appeared, still jauntily immaculate, a dowager on either arm. He deposited his burdens with an air of polite relief.

"Well," he opened brightly, "that was almost a tragic end to our adventure. Ah, it's you, Miss Oliver!"

"Yes," she said. "I'm still hanging around, you see. It wasn't a tragedy then?"

"The Doctor's brought him around, I believe."

"Who was it?" she asked for the third time.

"Fellow named Crots, they tell me," said the Englishman. "Queer sort of blighter, I believe. I only met him for a minute."

That was the name of the man about whom Harry Prentiss had spoken, she remembered. His other name was Gene. "How did it happen?" she inquired, without much interest.

"Drunk, most likely," responded the dowager who sat beside her. "Lost his balance, I suppose. Last time I saw him he was perched on the rail like a blackbird."

In Widdowson's car, a little later, she agreed that it would be pleasant to accept a room at the Mardena than to drive to Evanston. Blackwood, impatient, had threatened to take a taxicab and leave them. He was wearing a suit of Heviland's yachting clothes, which fitted him in only one or two particulars. His impatience communicated itself to all of them. It was as if they realized that tidings were awaiting.

In the lobby, White came up swiftly.

"Here's a pretty mess, Mr. Widdowson," he growled. "The police have found that Chambers isn't Chambers, after all. He's Jeffrey Collingham, the New York banker!"

Chapter Six

IT simplified matters, after a fashion—the police discovery of private papers in the dead man's effects, establishing his correct identity. As Chambers, he might have remained a mystery for weeks; but as Jeffrey Col-



DETECTIVE WHITE

lingham he became a person of consequence. His history was known; so too, in some part, were his associations.

At the same time, the second identification complicated matters. It made a national sensation out of what had been a local problem of only minor interest. Mr. Blackwood felt himself trembling on the verge of large disclosures.

He said nothing about his adventures, at the *Chronicle* office, however. The prospect of writing a daily story about the progress of the mystery did not attract him; and probably it would not have been permitted.

Blackwood's *confères* were familiar enough with his peculiar habit of mind; but they made no serious call upon his abilities. He was too much the facile theorist—the dilettante—for his superiors; there was always the danger that he would plunge the paper into a libel suit. Occasionally, when a particularly troublesome crime had stirred the city, he was permitted to write a Chestertonian essay on the subject. But his reputation was tremendous. A nod from him was something in the nature of an accolade. His long, lank figure swinging along the boulevard was one of the minor spectacles of the Windy City.

HE read the early afternoon newspapers with attention. The story of the private life of the late Jeffrey Collingham, as revealed in dispatches from New York, bore faintly on the story told by the spurious Chambers to Horace Trample. Collingham had been married in Chicago, some years previously, to Effie Leedom, an actress; Blackwood recalled her vaguely as a large and puzzled blonde. Presumably, then, the fellow had spent the first night of his honeymoon in a Chicago hotel. They had been separated—divorced—for almost a year, it appeared. There was the possibility, at least, that Collingham, in his Chambers rôle, had been telling nothing but the truth.

However, Blackwood really didn't think so. A hazy memory had entered his mind the night before, when White had made his sensational announcement. It still troubled him. Somehow he associated the name Collingham with quite another actress.

"Now, who the devil was it?" He put the question up to Widdowson, a veritable almanac of stage celebrities.

Widdowson could not remember any whisper of the matter. "Probably just a bit of gossip, anyway," he ventured. "God knows, we hear enough of it." An idea occurred to him. "Could it have been in Winchell's column?"

"It might, at that," said Blackwood. He shrugged. Unhappily, there was as yet no index to Winchell.

He had drawn a blank, the night before, during his long vigil at the window of the dead man's room; and the circumstances annoyed him. The idea had struck home like an inspiration, and its failure was disheartening. The Doctor, obviously weary, had been excused from the nocturnal vigilance.

Over a tardy breakfast—in the hotel room which Widdowson's courtesy provided for him—Blackwood, a little haggard, was thinking the problem out afresh, when he excused himself a trifle abruptly, leaving the hotel proprietor staring. Another inspiration had occurred.

There was one feature of his theory, at least, that possibly he could test, he reflected as the elevator took him upward. And once more he shut himself into the ninth-floor chamber in which the puzzle had originated.

What he needed was a flag of some sort, but his pocket handkerchief would do. He opened one of the windows several inches, and pushed the handkerchief out upon the sill, weighting it with a copy of the Bible—furnished by the hotel—which he borrowed from a dresser drawer. Then he thoughtfully walked out. Six minutes later he was alighting from another elevator on the eighth floor of the Hotel Jamaica, just across the street. A little elf, near the shaft, gave onto a window that looked out upon the street. There was no one in the corridor to wonder at his actions.

He raised the window swiftly and thrust forth his head. Yes, there it was! His handkerchief was bravely fluttering in the light breeze to mark the room that he had left behind. And he had been right, he felt certain, in his mathematics. The eighth floor of the Jamaica was almost level with the ninth floor of the *Mardena*. No doubt the ceilings were higher in the other hotel. Standing at a window of the *Mardena*,—say the window of Room 940,—it would not be difficult to see into a room across the way,

particularly if that room were lighted. More particularly, if one had a decent pair of field-glasses. The line of vision would be slightly downward, and that was all to the good.

His own operations, the night before, had been fruitless, to be sure; but he was confident his thinking had been sound. And the room in the Hotel Jamaica that figured as precisely opposite the marked room of the *Mardena*, was—

Blackwood leaned out of his window like a locomotive fireman leaning from his cab. He counted the *Mardena*'s windows carefully, from the alley to the aperture he had flagged; then—at greater peril—checked them against the parallel windows of the Jamaica. Then he closed the window that he had opened, and strolled tentatively along the corridor. On the door of Room 827 he gently knocked.

There was no reply, and after he had knocked again, he tried the knob. But Room 827 was unqualifiedly locked.

It was annoying. This was the room, however; he felt certain of it. It had to be this one, or the one immediately adjoining. Collingham himself had obviously figured the matter rather accurately; he had even changed his room at the *Mardena* to correct his view. An ingenious fellow!

Inside the room that he was picketing a clock began to strike the hour. There was a stuttering sound in the mechanism, as if the thing were tired, and after six halting, bell-like blows, it gave over the attempt. If the occupant of Room 827 kept appointments by the contraption, reflected Mr. Blackwood, it was likely that she was often late.

Conceivably it had run down. If she had forgotten to wind it the night before, what would be the significance of that omission?

His own timepiece showed the hour to be eleven. His task now was to discover who occupied the room, if possible before that occupant returned. It was so easy that it surprised him. The switchboard-girl, when he had called the room from the lobby, was almost chatty.

"I don't think Miss Mocke has come in yet," she observed. "You called a little while ago, didn't you?"

Blackwood lied gracefully. He was sorry to be such a nuisance.

"I'll ring her for you, anyway," purred the girl at the switchboard.

The attempt was as vain as Blackwood had expected; but he was satisfied with his progress.

Kitty Mocke, then, was the occupant of Room 827. It was the name he had been seeking. The syllables "clicked" with the vague memory that had been teasing him. Somewhere, at some time, he had heard her name associated with Collingham's. And the circumstance that Collingham had died mysteriously in a room directly opposite that occupied by the actress was too remarkable to be regarded as mere coincidence.

She was playing a good part in "Uncle Claude" at the Hyperion, a character part of some importance. Blackwood, in point of fact, had singled her out for eulogy, on the occasion of the piece's opening, some weeks before.

SITTING loosely on the small of his back, in a comfortable chair in the Jamaica lounge, Blackwood again turned matters over in his agile mind. Collingham was supposed to have arrived from New York on Monday, and certainly he had been murdered some time Monday night. His body had been discovered in Trample's room on Tuesday morning, largely as a result of Miss Oliver's insistence. The show in which Miss Kitty Mocke held forth had been in evidence for several weeks. It was, of course, possible that Collingham had been in the city for a longer time than anybody knew, that he had merely removed his belongings from one hotel to another on the Monday that he had registered at the *Mardena* as from New York.

Either way, it seemed a plausible hypothesis that he had come to see the actress.

On Monday night, quite late, for reasons of his own, he had elected to spy upon her—through a pair of field-glasses—and his murder had promptly followed. The inference was obvious. It was in point of fact almost too obvious. Too easy! For how did the actress know that Collingham was spying?

There was the telephone, to be sure. Had he called her on the telephone, to upbraid her? Had she, then, infuriated, sped across the street with murder in her heart and morphine in her purse? It seemed a little silly, looked at in that way.

The alternative was better: an emissary had been employed, and that emissary had been a man. Before the murder, pleasures had passed between them; whiskey had been offered and accepted; and the actual murder had been the subtle and cowardly crime of poison. Kitty Mocke was merely an accessory before the fact—although guilty, no doubt, as Judas Iscariot himself.

"Cheese!" murmured Mr. Blackwood. "Now we're getting along."

The hell of it was, however, that as soon as one began casting about for a male murderer, one was dismayed to realize how miraculously Horace Trample filled the bill. If it could be shown that Trample knew Miss Kitty Mocke, his statement about Collingham would be seen to be highly improbable. On the other hand, if it could be shown that Trample did not know Kitty Mocke, the Doctor's innocence might safely be assumed.

It was a point, reflected Blackwood, that ought to be put to a test as soon as possible. Meanwhile, the Hyperion was close at hand.

IN the office of the theater he found the company manager and the theater manager preparing to go in different directions for luncheon. They seemed to have been annoyed by something.

"What can you tell me about Kitty Mocke?" asked Blackwood brightly.

Steep, the company manager, regarded him morosely; he spoke bitterly. "Well, what would you like us to tell you?" he inquired. "That she's a double-crosser? I've no objections. Write your own ticket! But how did you happen to hear about it?"

"About what?" asked Blackwood, startled. Was the story already out? Had the police anticipated him? "Has anything happened to her?"

There was a note of cynical regret in Steep's voice. "Not to her," he said. "Not likely! No, it's her husband that's dead. In consequence, Miss Mocke is sorry that she must leave the company."

"Ah!" said Blackwood. "So she's left you!"

"Flat," said Steep. "No warning whatsoever—just a telephone message, half an hour ago. We're shoving Ora Thornton into the part for the matinee. That's all I know." Blackwood was digesting the information he had received.

"So Jeffrey Collingham was her husband," he mused. "She didn't mention his name," said Steep. He was suddenly interested. "You mean this banker person who committed suicide at the Mardena? Well, well!"

Mr. Blackwood was not proud of himself. "Well, what did she say?" he snapped. "What did she say, Steep? Why do you call her a double-crosser?"

"Ditching the company like that," said Steep. "It's our good luck that Thornton happens to know the part."

"I see! The show must go on and all that sort, eh? Marbles!" said Blackwood profanely.

He was deeply annoyed with himself for his revelation about Collingham. Steep, he supposed, would somehow turn the situation to his own advantage, in the way of publicity, and the fat would be in the fire.

Well, let him. To hell with Steep!

"You don't happen to know where she was when she telephoned, I suppose?" he said.

"She didn't say. At her hotel, probably."

The two managers were looking at him curiously. A new grouping of the figures in the case was trying to form itself in Blackwood's mind. Since Collingham had registered under a false name, it was probable that he had not wished the delectable Kitty to realize his presence in the city, after all. If Collingham had been in truth her husband, Blackwood's first easy assumption of an illicit tryst, complicated by the appearance of a second lover, was already knocked into a cocked hat. For one of the two lovers he must now substitute the figure of a wronged husband.

Well, it was a situation that opened up new vistas.

The revelation of the dead man's identity had been withheld from the morning papers; it was in the early afternoon editions, on sale by ten o'clock. She had telephoned to Steep somewhere around eleven, according to the manager. It was quite possible, therefore, that she had read the death-news in the papers. But in any case, why "ditch the company" entirely, as Steep expressed the

outrage, when she might with perfect propriety have asked a few days off?

It was all a little muddled, thought Mr. Blackwood testily; but one thing, at least, was certain—as soon as possible he must see Miss Kitty Mocke and ask some questions. Failing that, he must somehow gain entrance to her room.

"Who's been dating Kitty, these last few weeks, Steep?" he asked pensively. "Anybody in particular?"

"Search me," said Steep; and the theater manager also shrugged.

"Find out for me, will you?" said Blackwood. "Somebody back-stage must know."

"What's the big idea, Riley?" asked Halpin, the theater manager.

It occurred to Blackwood that he might as well go the whole hog; it might stop their mouths, for the time being. "Collingham didn't commit suicide," he told them. "At least, I don't believe he did. I think he was—ah—helped out of the world. Keep that under your hats, however. It may be only an idea of mine."

He smiled at their expressions of surprise.

Steep was stuttering. "You mean that—Kitty—that Kitty—"

"Not necessarily. I'm not sure of anything, just yet. You can help by digging up that information. And it's just between ourselves, eh? Until we decide to bust it? Right? We'll talk about it later."

Less dissatisfied with himself than he had been, Mr. Blackwood took his gloves, his hat, his stick and his departure. But he reopened the door and put his head back into the room. "If Kitty calls again, try to find out where she is, will you? She wasn't at the Jamaica when she telephoned you. I want to see her."

It was possible, he reflected, that Kitty was meditating a departure from the city. Her abrupt severance of relations with the theater seemed to indicate it.

With burglarious intention, he returned to the Jamaica, and somewhat to his confusion found the actress in her room. He had gone straight up, without telephoning. They greeted each other on the threshold.

"Why, Mr. Blackwood!" said Kitty Mocke.

He could not be certain whether she was frightened or just astonished. Certainly she did not look precisely grief-stricken.

"Then you do remember me," he said. "May I come in?"

"Why, of course, I remember you! And do come in," said Kitty.

It was astonishment, he decided; not fright.

He sank into a chair. Miss Mocke did not appear to be considering flight. There were no evidences of haste.

"And so you've left the company," he said.

"You've heard that, then! I didn't think I was important enough to rate attention." Her smile was friendly and attractive. "Yes, it's true. My husband died—rather suddenly. It shocked me. I didn't feel that I could go on." She added: "It was a break for Thornton. I knew she knew the lines."

"Blackwood made a sympathetic noise in his throat. "Have I met him?" he asked. "To tell the truth, I didn't know you were married. Nothing recent, I hope!"

"Not many people knew about it," she answered indirectly; and added: "About a year."

"I'm sorry," said Blackwood. "An accident? You said he died rather suddenly?"

"He committed suicide," said Kitty Mocke.

"Forgive me," he begged. "I can understand that it must have been a shock. You will be going back to New York shortly, I suppose."

"New York?" She raised her eyebrows.

"It was my impression your home was in New York."

"My home," said Kitty Mocke, "is in Texas. But you are right—I shall be going to New York shortly. It is my husband's home."

"I'm sorry," he said again. "There's nothing you would care to have me say about him, in the paper, I suppose? In the circumstances, perhaps the less said the better."

SHE surprised him. "There has already been enough said in the papers to satisfy me, Mr. Blackwood. There really isn't any secret about the matter. There won't be long, at any rate. As I say, not many people knew about it—but my husband was Jeffrey Collingham, the banker."

"Great Scott!" said Blackwood. He was a bit of an actor himself, he reflected immodestly.

"Yes," she said, nodding. "So you see, it isn't publicity I shall be needing."

He agreed; with sympathetic heartiness he agreed. "Why," said Blackwood, "it was only yesterday you heard of it, then?"

She avoided the trap.

"Only today," she corrected him. "I read about it in the papers—less than two hours ago."

"Then you haven't seen him!"

"I've seen him," said Kitty Mocke, a little grimly. "I couldn't believe it—so I went at once to the place where the papers said he had been taken. It was horrible! An undertaker's shop, in Randolph Street. I kept hoping, you see! But it was Jeffrey. I almost fainted. Then I went to a drugstore and telephoned the theater."

It was a careful and plausible story.

"Do you mean that you identified him—officially—for the police?"

She shook her head. "There was no necessity. A Mr. Melton—a banker of this city, and a friend of Jeffrey's—had just left. He had seen it in the papers too, and gone right over. The undertaker told me."

The name rang familiarly in Blackwood's ear. Where had he heard it recently?

"What did you tell the undertaker?" he asked her curiously.

"I said I thought I knew the man—the man who was dead—and he let me look at the body. When I recognized it, he told me about Mr. Melton. He told me there wasn't any mystery about it, though; the police already knew who Jeffrey was. I think Mr. Melton was going to them, anyway."

"You didn't tell him that Mr. Collingham was your husband?"

"No."

"Why not?"

"I don't know," said Kitty Mocke. She hesitated. "I just don't know!"

"You'll have to tell the police sometime, you know," he pointed out. "You'll have to claim the body, won't you?"

"I suppose so. Yes, of course, I will! And you mustn't misunderstand me—I was fond of Jeffrey. I really was! You see," she burst out, "it's going to be messy, Mr. Blackwood—I'm afraid it is. Why was Jeffrey in Chicago, masquerading as Jordan Chambers? I suppose you've read the papers."

"You haven't any idea?"

"No."

"And you think there may be something—er—'messy' behind it all?"

"I don't know what to think," said Kitty Mocke. She smiled a wan little smile. "There's a situation for you—an actress afraid of publicity!"

An idea crossed his mind. "Is there a real Jordan Chambers?"

"Not that I ever heard of."

"I thought you might have been suggesting it. Probably not, though. The initials are Collingham's own. That usually happens when a man takes another name."

She broke the silence that had succeeded his last remark. "However, you didn't come here to listen to all this! I'm sorry. Why did you come, Mr. Blackwood?"

"To tell the truth," said Blackwood, "I came to ask you about a man named Trample—Doctor Horace Trample. You know him, I believe. A toxicologist!"

Her eyes were thoughtful, her glance level. "Doctor Horace Trample? I don't think I've ever heard the name before. It's a name that one would be likely to remember, isn't it? What made you think I knew him?"

"Perhaps it doesn't matter now," he said. "But about your husband. That's important. I rather think you had better tell the police about him, before long. It's good advice. It'll look better—later on—whatever may develop."

Miss Mocke agreed. "I believe you are right," she said.

He was standing now; and suddenly—on an impulse, for he had until then forgotten all about it—he crossed the room and pushed aside the window curtains. Yes, it was still there—his handkerchief, fluttering in the breeze, nine floors above the traffic of the thoroughfare.

"That's rather odd," he commented; and she came and

stood beside him at the window. "Isn't it?" he questioned. "Somebody's handkerchief—it almost looks as if it were a signal of some kind!"

She steadied herself against the window-frame. "It is odd," agreed Miss Kitty Mocke, "isn't it? Very odd!" And after a moment, with a trace of confusion, she said: "You know, I've never thanked you for your marvelous review. Particularly what you said about me. It was wonderful!"

He turned to offer her a cigarette, and saw that she was standing rigid, her eyes fixed upon something on a table, in the corner. In the next instant she had stepped forward and obscured it. Her back was toward him; but he sensed that with a quick movement she had dropped her handkerchief over some object that had been too conspicuously in view upon the table.

With her eyes squarely upon him, he moved to the table and lifted the handkerchief, to look down upon the thing she had concealed. It was a hypodermic syringe, neatly laid out upon a piece of absorbent cotton.

Chapter Seven

WELL, there it was! The direct connection! Morphine in the stomach of Jeffrey Collingham, and this needle on a table in his wife's apartment.

Blackwood was a little shocked by his discovery, certain as he had been that Kitty held some vital clue to the murder. The way in which this new development implicated Doctor Trample was almost alarming.

Morphine, unless illegally obtained from dope-peddlers, was to be had only on presentation of a prescription. If Kitty Mocke, in private life, employed the needle of happiness and horror, who furnished the materials?

Blackwood sought the Jamaica's manager, in his rosewood office, and spun a tale of great ingenuity.

"I am an assistant to the producer of the 'Uncle Claude' comedy, now playing at the Hyperion," he explained in confidence. "It is possible that I am only one day ahead of the narcotic squad, on this investigation—I don't know. On the other hand, it is possible that my investigation may keep them from coming to you at all. Frankly, Mr. Halberd, has it ever occurred to you that dope-peddlers might be operating in this hotel?"

Mr. Halberd was horrified. "Good God, no!" he replied. "What do you mean?"

"Remember that what I am telling you is confidential," said Blackwood. "The fact is, Kitty Mocke is getting morphine from somebody. We're worried about her, at the theater, and we're trying to locate the source of her supply."

Once more the manager of the Hotel Jamaica called piously upon his Maker. "Kitty Mocke!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, I'm sorry to say she's somewhat of an addict. The maid who makes up her apartment could bear me out. I think, if it were necessary, I'm not prepared to say that the stuff is always delivered to her here; but that's the way it looks. We've checked the theater end of it."

"I can't believe it," said Halberd.

"It should be easy enough to prove," said Blackwood, "one way or another. We happen to know that she received a supply of it on Monday night. And we know there was some one with her, here, after eleven o'clock—say between eleven and twelve. There may have been no connection between the two circumstances, but it's likely that there was. Now, who is there that can tell us about Kitty's midnight visitor?"

"I see," said the manager. It was a nasty spot in which he found himself, and he must appear to be of help.

"There's the night-clerk, of course," he suggested dubiously. "But it's obvious that anybody on that kind of an errand would not report where he was going. He'd just slip in and hustle for the elevators."

Blackwood seemed struck by the objection. "That's true," he agreed. "Then you suggest the elevator man?"

Mr. Halberd thought it unlikely that the elevator man could know anything about it. "I'll speak to him myself, however, when he comes on duty," he promised.



SERGEANT CROACH

"It's only Monday night we're interested in, you know," said Blackwood. "How about the occupants of the adjoining rooms?"

The manager of the Jamaica was uncertain at the moment who occupied the rooms adjoining Room 827; but he would ascertain, and if the proper opportunity presented itself, would—

He spread his hands deprecatingly. "You realize the difficulty, of course?"

"I know! But we must get at it somehow," Blackwood insisted. "Look here! What about your boys? They're not exactly fools."

"Yes, that's possible. I'll speak to them, and let you know what they say. Where can I get in touch with you, later on?"

"Oh, let's get it over with at once," Blackwood urged. He glanced at his watch. "It's after twelve. You run your lads in several shifts, don't you? Some of your evening boys are certain to be back on duty. Better you and I, after all, than the narcotic squad!"

The hotel manager lifted his receiver, without enthusiasm, and gave the necessary orders; and shortly there stood before them an alert young person in buttons.

"You were on duty Monday night?" asked Halberd a trifle crossly.

"Yes sir, from six to twelve. I'm on today from twelve to six."

"This gentleman wants to ask you some questions about Monday night. You are to answer them as accurately as you can. Remember, however, that everything that passes between us is in confidence. Do you understand?"

"Yes sir."

"What's your name, son?" asked Riley Blackwood pleasantly.

"Jamieson, sir—Charles Jamieson."

"On Monday night, fairly late—after the show, in fact—Miss Mocke, the actress, had a visitor, possibly several visitors. Did you happen to see any of them?"

"Yes sir."

Halberd was greatly alarmed. "No names just yet, Jamieson," he warned sharply; then he apologized to Blackwood. "After all, the man you have in mind would not be one of Miss Mocke's more usual visitors, I take it!"

Blackwood concealed his annoyance. "Possibly not," he agreed; "and yet—can we be sure? After all, the exchange may have been given the appearance of a social visit." He wheeled upon the boy. "Do you know the names of Miss Mocke's visitors on Monday night, Jamieson?"

"No sir."

Halberd's relief was evident in his face. Blackwood shrugged.

"That's all right, Jamieson," he said. "Never mind the names, just now. So there were two of them, were there?" Jamieson, a bit embarrassed, turned his eyes upon his employer, who graciously nodded. "Answer Mr. Blackwood's questions, Jamieson," he ordered.

"There were three of them, sir," said Jamieson.

"Well, well!" Blackwood commented. "Were they all together?"

"I don't know, sir." The bellboy hesitated. "I think so; but I can't say for sure. Two of them came out together, and the other one stayed behind; so maybe they weren't all together in the first place."

"I see. But you saw all three of them?"

"No sir. I only saw the two who came out together. But I knew there was another man in the room, because I heard his voice."

"I see," said Blackwood again. "Well, what time was all this, Jamieson; and how did you happen to see them leave the room?"

Young Mr. Jamieson considered. "Well, sir, it was somewhere close to midnight; I know that, because I was figuring on going off duty in a little while. A call came through from 827 for two bottles of ginger ale and some set-ups. I took them up. But when I got there, two of the men were just leaving, see? I met them in the hall."

"Good!" cried Blackwood. "Then you had a look at their faces. Can you describe them for me?"

"Well—they looked excited."

"Excited, eh? That's fine! Now what I want, Jamieson, since we do not know their names, is a description of the men, from which I might possibly recognize them if I saw them. Hair, eyes, weight, height—clothing."

Blackwood listened with increasing interest to the descriptions vouchsafed by young Mr. Jamieson. The second man described—the shorter of the two—troubled him; but of the first there could be no doubt whatever. It was an accurate portrait of the late Jeffrey Collingham.

Who the dickens, then, could have been his companion? He was certainly not Horace Trample.

He pressed the question. "Short, you said, and sandy? You saw him before he put his hat on? And a bit thick, eh? A fairly tough-looking baby?"

"Yes sir. Looked to me like he was a sort of body-guard to the other fellow." An expression of interest crossed the boy's face. "Say!" he cried. "The other fellow called him Gene—I just remembered!"

Good Lord! Gene Crotz!

But was it possible? The ugly-looking thug that he had himself rescued from the lake, only the night before? What possible connection could Gene Crotz have had with Jeffrey Collingham?

"It rather looks to me, Mr. Halberd, as if this second man is the man we're looking for," he commented. "What do you think?"

It looked very much like it, to Mr. Halberd. The manager asked a question of his own. "You never saw this man before, did you, Jamieson? The one you heard called Gene?"

"No sir."

Halberd was both relieved and interested. He seemed to be on safe ground. "And what about the third man, Jamieson? The man you didn't see. You didn't recognize his voice, I suppose?"

"Couldn't, sir. All I heard him say was, 'Never mind!'"

"Never mind," repeated Blackwood. He cocked his head and tried it with a different inflection: "Never mind?" But the vocal experiment told him nothing. "You didn't see him leave the hotel, later?"

"No sir, not that I know of, anyway. I might have, without knowing it was him."

"What happened after the two men left?"

"Nothing that I know of. Miss Mocke took the tray from me at the door. I didn't go in. When she closed the door, I went away."

"Did Miss Mocke also look excited?"

"Sort of—yes sir. But I just figured they'd all been having something to drink; and two of them knew when they'd had enough."

"I see. That sounds very plausible. But I think that second fellow is our man, Mr. Halberd. I think he came to deliver the goods. The fellow with him was just a blind. I don't know about the third man."

Blackwood was digging into a billfold. "He's earned a dollar, anyway," he observed. "Wish I could make it two. Nothing else you can think of, Jamieson?"

"No sir. I think that's all there is." The bellboy grinned. "Thank you, sir."

IT occurred to Mr. Blackwood, as he strolled into the telephone alcove at the Mardena, that he had not done too badly. The phone book revealed that one Gene Crotz had an office in La Salle Street; but there was no clue to the tough baby's professional activities. Blackwood took a taxi for La Salle Street.

It was a dingy old building over near the river. He found Gene Crotz's name in capitals on the index board and took a wheezy elevator to the top floor.

Then for a startled moment his eyes considered the legend underneath the name upon the door: "Special Investigator."

There was a card beside it. "Back in Five Minutes," but there was no indication how long before his arrival the thing had been put in place. A swift impression crossed his mind that the placard was as much a fixture as the building.

Blackwood turned the door-handle and pushed inward, but the door was really locked. Whatever the length of time he had been away, Gene Crotz was not now in his office. But the locks in these old buildings were notori-



GENE CROTZ

ously simple. There was a key in his pocket that would open it as if it were a can of sardines.

Happily, he was out of sight of the elevator; but he waited until he heard the thing descending. Then he took his key out of his pocket and let himself in as neatly as if he had been opening his own back door.

There were two offices within, beyond a small barrier with a swinging gate. One was apparently for visitors, so he chose the other to begin with. Crotz was not a tidy man, he noted with regret; his desk was littered with legal-looking papers and presumably unanswered correspondence. On the walls were a calendar, and a framed photograph of Gene Crotz in uniform, standing beside a military plane.

Blackwood pivoted slowly in the center of the small chamber; then he turned his attention to the papers on the desk. Their lack of order made it seem unlikely that Crotz would know that anything had been moved.

DISLIKE for Crotz kept mounting within Blackwood as he worked. The investigator's principal activities were along the lines of espionage, and Blackwood was inclined to wonder if they did not include blackmail also.

In the end, he said "Damn!" softly, and sat down in Crotz's chair. It seemed obvious that if the fellow had been in correspondence with Jeffrey Collingham, he must be carrying the documents upon his person.

However, he changed his mind immediately. Collingham's letters would be in the safe, of course! And his accomplishments did not include safe-cracking.

Confound Crotz! He almost hoped he would come in and catch him.

He became bolder and telephoned to Widdowson. "Listen, Tony!" he said. "You'll never guess where I am."

Widdowson was disinclined toward guessing. "I'm in Gene Crotz's office," said Blackwood. "What do you suppose the gentleman's business is?"

But Widdowson did not the faintest idea.

"He's a private detective," reported Blackwood. "You know, the sort of dick who trails a man's wife and the other fellow to a hotel. What does that suggest to you?"

It suggested nothing immediately to Widdowson, who was interested to know, however, what Blackwood was doing in the investigator's office.

"I'm waiting for the blighter to come in," said Blackwood. "I've discovered he was with Collingham on Monday night. . . . What? No, at the Jamaica! There was a scene of some sort; I don't know what it was about, just yet—but both of us can guess. For all I know, he may have been at the Mardena too. That's what I want you to find out. Tell White about it, will you? See what he can turn up. I'll be along for dinner."

He hung up the receiver and returned to his inspection of the melancholy office. A desk pad caught his eye; its top sheet announced the current date, in large letters, but was otherwise blank.

Reversing time, he turned quickly to the preceding day—Tuesday—and read a penciled note. "Bourbon," it read simply, and then some figures. They looked like "\$3.75." The modest record, no doubt, of one of Mr. Crotz's purchases.

He turned another page and read, beneath the printed legend MONDAY, the one word *Chambers*. . . .

At the Mardena, en route to Widdowson's quarters, the speeding Blackwood crossed the path of Dr. Harold Merkhman, and was greeted cordially.

"You don't happen to want my ring again, I suppose," said the house physician amiably; and instantly added: "Well, it begins to look as if your friend the toxicologist is in for trouble!"

"The deuce he is! What's happened?"

The house physician shrugged. "Nothing yet, I believe. But Croach was here a little while ago, looking for Mr. Widdowson. I saw him talking to Mefat, in the lobby, and Mefat told me what he said. No fingerprints of any kind in 940, except Trample's and the dead man's—and I believe those of the boy who brought the bottles. Croach had been trying to reach the Doctor and couldn't find him."

"He's at that infernal medical convention, I suppose," said Blackwood irritably.

He burst into Widdowson's living-room, muttering, and suddenly realized that Croach and Barry had not yet left

the hotel. They were seated, very much at their ease, drinking some of Widdowson's good Scotch.

The proprietor of the Mardena was relieved. "I'm glad you've come, Riley," he said. "Croach is worried about the Doctor. He's been trying to get in touch with him, all afternoon."

"He's at his medical convention, I suppose," retorted Blackwood. "He'll be along for dinner now, at almost any minute."

The spokesmen for the two detectives cleared his throat. "Maybe he will, Mr. Blackwood," he observed pacifically. "But he *wasn't* at his convention this afternoon; we tried to reach him there. You haven't seen him, I suppose?"

"I haven't seen him since last night," said Blackwood.

"I intended to look him up myself tonight."

"I hope you find him," said the police officer. "He promised us he wouldn't leave the city without telling us." He sipped again. "I suppose you've heard the latest news about the dead man. His wife's come forward to claim the body. Just a little while ago. Perhaps it isn't in the papers yet—but you have ways of finding out things for yourself!"

Blackwood laughed softly. "Oh yes! It's Kitty Mocke you're talking about. It was I who urged her to lose no time about it. I suppose she told you that."

"She did," said Croach, without rancor. "How'd you happen to know she was his wife?"

Blackwood laughed again. "Sheer inspiration, Croach," he answered. "Some people call it genius. I went to her, I asked her, and she told me."

He asked a question of his own: "What's your latest theory about the Doctor? How does the revelation of Miss Mocke have any bearing upon Trample? She never heard of him before."

The big policeman shrugged. "Maybe she didn't," he agreed, "but it all looks kind of funny. She didn't know her husband was in the city, yet he was right across the street from her on the night he died. She didn't know this Doctor Trample, yet he's a poison specialist, and Collingham was killed with poison. And the only fingerprints in that room upstairs were Collingham's and this Doctor Trample's."

It was an able enough summary, Blackwood inwardly admitted. "Whose fingerprints were on that card, Croach?" he asked abruptly. "The one that was hanging on the door-knob."

"Nobody's," admitted the detective. "Not even Collingham's. But I suppose he hung it out himself. You called the turn on that."

"I'm smart," said Blackwood. "I'll call the turn on Trample too. He didn't do it. I don't know yet who did—but it wasn't Trample."

He sincerely hoped that he was right. If the Doctor had disappeared, as this police detective seemed to think, it might be Trample, after all.

Chapter Eight

WHERE the dickens was the Doctor?

His belongings were definitely in his room; he had left no tidings at the desk, for any who might care to see him. Miss Oliver, reached at her home in Evanston, by telephone, replied that she had seen nothing of him since early morning. They had breakfasted together, then had parted without a definite engagement.

"There's no sense in blaming the police," quoth Mr. Blackwood, mellow after a good dinner with Widdowson. "Their present theory of the case was practically inevitable. What else can they believe? Damn Trample, anyway, for running off like that! What about White? Did you ask him about Crotz?"

Widdowson shook his head. "Sorry—those infernal coppers came in, just as I was getting around to it."

"See if you can find out," urged Blackwood. "I'm interested in Crotz. He's a key-piece in this puzzle. But there's one man who may be able to tell us something about him—and that's Heviland."

He glanced at his wrist-watch. "If Heviland isn't at a theater, or some place, I might catch him at his home, right now."

From the littered dinner-table at which he sat, Blackwood abruptly reached to the small telephone-stand near by. "What's Heviland's number, Tony?" he inquired.

Widdowson supplied it, and waited morosely while Blackwood made the call. . . .

"All right, Blackwood speaking. Hello, Heviland—Riley Blackwood! I called to see if you were at home. I want some information about Gene Croz—the thug whose life I saved last night. I thought perhaps you—"

He interrupted himself to listen.

"The hell you say! Well, the Doctor's missing too; I hope it doesn't become epidemic. Trample, I mean; the medico you met last night. Maybe they're off together somewhere."

He listened again. . . . "All right, I'll be along in twenty minutes."

He banged down the receiver and turned to Widdowson. "Croz vanished from the yacht, last night, shortly after we left the party. He must have dripped his way across the city, unless Heviland had another suit of clothes! Well, I'm off to Heviland's. It seems he would a tale unfold."

"FRANKLY," said the yachtsman, when they were seated in his library, with glasses in their hands, "I don't know what to think of this damned Croz. He's a bit of an embarrassment. I suppose you know he's a detective!"

"I discovered that, this afternoon," said Blackwood, "when I went looking for him at his office. A very lousy one, I should imagine."

Heviland seemed puzzled. "His office?" he echoed. "You mean he has an office in the city?"

"He calls it that, I fancy. It's a dirty hole, in La Salle Street. Where'd you think he hailed from?"

"You mean that—he's a private detective?"

"What did you think he was?"

"Well, I'll be damned!" said Heviland. "Why, the lying rascal told me he was from New York—a member of the regular detective force!"

Blackwood was interested. "He came to see you?"

"Just yesterday afternoon. Showed me his credentials, said he understood I was giving a party in the evening, and asked permission to attend it. I asked him what the big idea was, and he said he was keeping an eye out for somebody he expected to turn up. Naturally I was interested; but he wouldn't mention names. When I pressed him, he said the man was an 'international crook,' and I'd have to take his word for it. Promised not to make any trouble at the party—just wanted to keep an eye on the fellow—and so on! I didn't know what the deuce to do about it. His credentials seemed in perfect order. I never thought of doubting him."

"Faked the credentials," said Blackwood. "He probably has 'em for every city in the union. Who did you think he had in mind, Heviland?"

"Well, I think I know my own friends," the yachtsman answered; "but I had to admit that there would be a number of strangers, probably, on hand. There always are. People bring other people, in spite of hell and high water—and there are usually one or two gate-crashers. But as a rule, they're not any of them international crooks!"

Blackwood laughed at the expression on the other's face. "Well," he said,

Heviland grimaced. "I see the same idea in your mind that was in mine. *Halderness!* What else could I think? As far as I knew, he was the only 'international' figure who was certain to be among the guests; and I had an idea it was Halderness he was talking about, because he was so determined not to mention him. A lovely predicament! My principal guest—supposed to be a distinguished English writer and explorer!"

The yachtsman shrugged. "What was there for me to do? I didn't know the fellow, after all—Halderness, I mean. You take a man like that on trust. He was a guest at Melton's; but he had gone to Melton because he thought Melton would be interested in financing some sort of an exploration. Nobody, I suppose, really knew him, beyond what he had to say about himself. Anyway, I didn't want him to make a fool of me. So I told Croz to rent a pair of tails and come along."

Blackwood was staring. "Melton!" he said. "By Jove, I knew I had heard the name before!"

"He's a well-known banker," Heviland explained.

"I know," said Blackwood. "I was wondering, a little while ago, where I had heard his name. It was Halder-

ness who mentioned it. He said he was staying with the Meltons last night."

"You haven't heard whether anything happened to Halderness, after the party, I suppose?" Blackwood asked.

"I don't know," said Heviland. "I understood from him, last night, that he was leaving on the Century for New York today. I imagine he's gone. If so, I suppose Croz is after him. You're quite sure, Blackwood, that he isn't a New York detective?"

"I'm not very sure of anything, any more," said Blackwood. "But if Croz is a New York detective, I'm the crown prince. You say he vanished from the yacht, last night. When would that be, Heviland?"

Heviland considered. "Shortly after you and Widdowson left, I think. His clothes were still fairly wet, so I suppose he took a taxi when he reached the Drive. He wouldn't have far to walk."

"Had Halderness already left?"

"Yes, he and the Meltons left right after you did."

"The Meltons were there too, were they? But of course, they would be. Sorry I didn't meet them. Well, I'm certainly obliged to you, Heviland! You're probably wondering what the devil all this has to do with me. Somehow—I'm not quite certain—this Croz reptile is mixed up in Tony's jolly little mystery. It appears that he was in the employ of Collingham, the man who turned up dead in one of Tony's beds."

He stood up, but Heviland checked him with a gesture.

"Hold on," he protested. "You've only heard half the story. Did you know that Croz insisted that somebody had pushed him overboard?"

Blackwood subsided in his chair. "The devil he did!"

"I told him he was crazy, and he just grinned at me."

"Halderness?" asked Blackwood.

"God knows! He wouldn't mention any names, as usual. Naturally, I guessed that he meant Halderness. Which raises an interesting point. Was Halderness in a position to do it?"

Blackwood cast his mind back to the night before.

"Halderness was with our party for a time; but *was* he at the moment Croz went overboard? Damned if I remember. No, by George, he wasn't! I was alone with Miss Oliver, when that happened. Halderness had gone away. So had everybody else, come to think of it—even the Doctor, he went last. We heard a splash, and then a scream—"

He paused, cocking his head sidewise like an owl. "Now who the devil was it that screamed, I wonder! A woman, of course. Somebody who knew what had happened, right after it had happened. She might even have seen something."

"It's possible," agreed the yachtsman. "I remember hearing somebody scream, myself. Well, it's a clue! I'm going to find out. After all, I know most of the people who were on the boat!"

Blackwood slowly nodded. "Yes," he said, "it's a clue. Let me hear what you discover, Heviland. But I'll be hanged," he added, "if I can understand what any of it has to do with Collingham."

He glanced quickly at a clock, standing on a bookcase, and rose again.

"I must rush off, Heviland," he said. "I promised Tony I'd see him before I tucked in. Keep me posted on anything you hear. You've given me something to think about, that's certain."

WIDDOWSON and White were waiting up for him. The hotel proprietor shook his head in answer to Blackwood's question about Trample.

"Hasn't come in yet," he reported. "Croch has been telephoning every five minutes for the last half-hour. He's been pestering Miss Oliver too, I think."

"What about Croz?" asked Blackwood testily.

"He was here on Monday night, all right. White says he saw him."

The house detective nodded. "That's right. I could have told you that yesterday, Mr. Blackwood, if I'd known you were interested in the mug. I saw him twice, in fact; once a little before midnight, and then again when it must have been close to one o'clock."

"Well, well!" said Mr. Blackwood. "Here?"

They were standing in the lobby.

"The first time he was sitting over there by the cigar-stand—smoking a cigar. The second time, he was just

going out the door. Looked to me as if he might have been coming from the elevators, but I can't be sure."

Chapter Nine

MR. BLACKWOOD rose late—his most pernicious habit, according to his aunt—and breakfasted in a favorite window-nook, from which it was possible to watch the speedboats race along the surface of the lake, and horsemen gallop in the parkway. The room was at once living-room and library, and it was a remarkable anachronism. There was not a stick of really modern furniture in it. Its principal pieces had been his grandfather's, in point of fact; but Blackwood liked his setting very well. It gave him a sense of detachment from the present, which he found restful if not always stimulating. The world was sometimes too much with him—at any rate, the flesh and the devil.

The number of the books was legion. Behind him, as he sipped and nibbled, Blackwood felt their presence and was complacently content. The wire-haired terrier, named Whisky by his proprietor, had come in with the breakfast-tray. He was all white, except for his ears, which were black. He now sat motionless upon his haunches, with upturned eyes imploring food. Blackwood pulled his ears and made a number of absurd remarks which, in a play, he would have found revoltingly sentimental. Then he came across with a full strip of bacon, and brought his mind back to the problem that was troubling him.

It made a difference—the mounting conviction that Trample had actually disappeared. Blackwood was annoyed. And just as he had been upon the point of clearing him, too! Something had happened to warn the Doctor, perhaps, that the police were planning to crack down upon him. Rather than face the music, he had gone away. Or perhaps he was protecting somebody of whose complicity he had guilty knowledge?

In the circumstances, the mysterious "somebody" could only be Blaine Oliver. No, no! He refused to consider it. . . . Prentiss, perhaps? After all, he was Blaine Oliver's friend. Was it possible that he was also the Doctor's?

"Ring-around-a-rosy," decided Mr. Blackwood bitterly; and fell to wondering who else would vanish before the day was out. Halderness, he had already learned, had really gone. Mrs. Melton had told him so, at any rate, over the telephone.

"Thursday morning," mused Blackwood pensively, "and what have I accomplished? Nothing! The admission fills me with shame."

It was perhaps this shame that drove him to spend the morning like any routine operative in interviewing people concerned with his problem. He called on Kitty Mocke and carried on a conversation that was profitless till he mentioned Gene Crotz. That name winged her, evidently, for she rebelled: "You have no right to question me this way, Mr. Blackwood!"

"Who the devil are you protecting?" he demanded. "I'm not protecting anybody," she retorted, "—except myself, against you."

And that was as far as he got with Kitty. He tried Blaine Oliver next; but his journey to her house in the peaceful university suburb of Evanston netted him little: she herself had a perfect alibi in her own visit with Evanston friends that fateful Monday night; she did not know Crotz from Adam; the manner of her statement that Harry Prentiss was an old friend suggested that she liked him very well indeed. . . . Nothing of importance there. Maybe he'd have better luck with Prentiss.

Blackwood took his departure. . . . The offices of Freeman, Prentiss and Palmer, architects, were in a tall building on the Boulevard, overlooking the lake and the Illinois Central railroad structure.

Blackwood seated himself and smiled blandly at a desk at Harry Prentiss, who did not appear either surprised or worried by the visitation.

"Smoke?" questioned the architect, pushing a box of cigarettes across the desk. "You know," he said, between

puffs a moment later, "I've been expecting you. I know you want to ask me where I was on Monday night, and all that."

"All right, Mr. Bones," said Blackwood, "where was you, precisely, on the evening and night of Monday de—what date was it, by the way?"

"It doesn't matter—it was Monday night; the night Collingham was murdered, as I understand it. The answer is: I'd rather not say. If necessary, I will—not now, but when it becomes necessary. But I wasn't in the room of Jeffrey Collingham, at any time, and I didn't murder him."

"Had you ever heard of Collingham, at that time?"

"As a name perhaps; I don't remember."

"Do you know Kitty Mocke, the actress?"

"I've seen her act. Personally, I don't know her."

"How about Gene Crotz?"

"I—well, yes! After a fashion, I know Gene Crotz."

"What was he doing on Heviland's yacht, the other night?"

"I don't know. It's what made me ask the questions I did about him, that night. His presence puzzled me. I wondered, a bit vaguely, knowing him to be a detective, if he might possibly be shadowing your friend the Doctor. I didn't see how or why—I just wondered."

"Or Miss Oliver?"

"The thought crossed my mind."

"Only Widdowson and I knew that the Doctor and Miss Oliver were going to the party," said Blackwood dryly.

"Sure—it even crossed my mind that he might be working with you."

"He wasn't," said Blackwood.

"Then I'm still puzzled."

"Have your own relations with Crotz—if any—been unpleasant?"

"Slightly, yes."

"No chance of his being on your tail, that night?"

Prentiss laughed. "I don't think so. No, I think not."

"It wasn't you who pushed him overboard?"

"What?"

"Crotz claims to have been pushed overboard. If so, somebody pushed him. . . . How about Halderness, the Englishman? What do you know about him?"

"Not a thing. Nice enough fellow. Aren't we getting a bit mixed?"

"Possibly," Blackwood agreed. "Do you know a man named Melton?"

"Yes, he was on the yacht too. With his wife. I was with her, as it happens, when Crotz went overboard. She heard the splash, and screamed like a good fellow."

"It was Mrs. Melton that screamed?"

"She let out quite a yelp. Others did too, I believe. Hers, being partly in my ear, sounded rather notable. But if you think now that she pushed Crotz overboard, you're crazy. She was beside me, at the time. I don't know where Crotz was."

Was it possible, Blackwood wondered, that the lady had been waiting for a splash?

He shrugged. "Trample has disappeared," he said briefly. "The police are looking for him."

"The Doctor? I'm sorry," said Prentiss. "I didn't think he was concerned in it."

"Keep on thinking so," said Blackwood. "Of course, you've answered the question that you think you haven't! So long."

"Go to hell, will you?" invited Prentiss pleasantly.

Chapter Ten

SO Prentiss had spent the night at the Mardena! Monday night! Blackwood was as sure of it as if he had seen the architect's name upon the register. The only alternative was that Prentiss had spent the night at the Jamaica. Either way, it had to be confessed that his alibi—if it were to be brought forward—would do him more harm than good. Prentiss was no fool. No wonder he preferred to reserve his defense.

Blackwood went to the Jamaica, made a plausible enough statement at the desk, and glanced over a num-



DOCTOR TRAMPLE

ber of pages of the register. There was no record of Harry Prentiss, and Blackwood did not push the inquiry. But at the Mardena, likewise, there was no faintest indication of the presence of the dapper architect on the night in question—or any other night, for that matter. "Stalemate!" said Blackwood, faintly annoyed.

"Unless he stayed with some one else," contributed White, the hotel watchdog.

Blackwood looked at him with admiring eye. "Joseph," he chirruped, "you have earned your salary for this week, by that suggestion. Look into it, will you?"

So much for Harry Prentiss, he told himself with satisfaction. The architect could now be left to White. He was probably unimportant, anyway.

A depressing thought of Horace Trample crossed his mind. What, if anything, he wondered, had the police discovered with reference to Trample? He reached for a telephone and made swift inquiry.

Nothing!

But police investigations were notoriously slow. If only he—Blackwood—could get in touch with Trample—find out what had alarmed him—what information he was concealing that might reflect upon another, eh? He went forth and took a taxi to the Fair grounds.

Outside the door of the auditorium, in the Hall of Science, he paused and read the notices posted on a bulletin board. Amazing! All over the city, it appeared, were programs of deep interest to the profession. Clinical programs in the various hospitals, scientific programs in any number of auditoriums.

There was a secretary, or something, just inside the door. Blackwood entered and made tentative inquiry for Horace Trample. But the secretary shook his head, indicating the congested auditorium, thick with tobacco smoke. Then he had a suggestion: "As soon as the speaker is finished I'll have an announcement made, if you like. If Doctor Trample is in the audience—"

"I don't believe he's in the audience," said Blackwood hopelessly. Then he brightened. "All right, but make it clear, please, that it is Mr. Blackwood who is asking for Doctor Trample—or for tidings of him. I'm very anxious to get in touch with him, as soon as possible."

THE specialist on the platform made an interminable and technical address; but it came to an end at last, and Blackwood saw the secretary's note carried forward to the chairman, on the rostrum. In another minute it was being read. He listened anxiously.

There was no immediate response from the assembled doctors; then a man rose, in the middle of the audience, and pushed his way into the aisle. As he approached, Blackwood saw with surprise that he was Dr. Harold Merkhman, the Mardena's resident physician.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Blackwood," said the Doctor, shaking hands. "Trample isn't here, of course; but I think I've got a line on him. Let's get outside, where we can talk." He led the way into the corridor.

"You're on the right track, anyway," he continued briskly, "and I'm certain the police aren't onto it, yet. Trample was here yesterday morning, whatever the police may think. I met a doctor here this morning who had seen him."

"He was another poison specialist; it occurred to me that he might know Trample, since they were in the same line; and he did. He said he saw him here, at the meeting, yesterday morning. Also, he saw him *after* the meeting, outside the gates. Trample was just getting into a taxicab with somebody."

"The deuce he was!"

"So he says. No reason to disbelieve him, I imagine. He didn't know anything about the police wanting the Doctor. All that's been kept out of the papers—even the exchange of rooms. I just pretended I was interested in meeting Trample, and he told me what he could."

Blackwood was thoughtful. "Your doctor friend didn't see the fellow who was with Trample?"

"Saw him, I suppose, but nothing registered. No reason why it should."

"What kind of a cab was it?"

"A purple. I asked that! Not much help, of course; the city's full of them."

"He had no conversation with Trample, yesterday?"

"Just, 'Hello—how are you?' when they met in the auditorium. Didn't speak to him at all, when he saw him later outside."

"He didn't see Trample at the afternoon session?"

"No. Thinks he wasn't there."

"I think so too," said Blackwood. "When was the meeting over, yesterday morning?"

"A little after twelve, I think."

"It marks the hour when Trample disappeared, at any rate," said Blackwood. "If it's of interest to anybody!"

He returned to the hotel, where he had a dinner date with Widdowson. But at the door of his room, a thought stayed him.

Why not have it over with?

After all, he had been pretty lenient with Kitty Mocke. He had given her every opportunity to tell her story. The time had come, it occurred to him, for a full-dress row, if necessary.

Why had not the police—Crouch, that able exponent of the third degree—descended upon Kitty and blasted the truth out of her? Surely they must have suspicions. Were they too, waiting for her in some manner to betray herself? H'm! Well, Kitty Mocke must tell the truth, at long last. The truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help her!

He descended to the street again and crossed to the Jamaica with a certain decision.

In the lobby of the other hotel, as luck would have it, he encountered Halberd, the manager.

"Just a minute—er—Mr. Blackwood," he purred. "You weren't going to pass me without speaking, were you?"

"Sorry," said Blackwood. "I was in a hurry, and I didn't immediately recognize you. I have an appointment with Miss Mocke."

Mr. Halberd too was sorry. "I'm afraid she's walked out on you, then," he observed. "She's already left the hotel. An hour ago!"

"She's—checked out, you mean?"

"An hour ago. In somewhat of a hurry."

"H'm," he said. "That's ditching the company with a vengeance! We sure don't know anything about it, at the theater. You're sure she's really gone? She's not still in her room? I think I'd better have a look."

"She's gone," said Halberd. "I'm not sorry. The whole incident has been deplorable." He hesitated. "Ah—by the way—Mr. Blackwood—are you working under cover? I took the liberty of calling up the theater yesterday, after you had left. They assured me that no one of your name was working there."

Blackwood cursed inwardly. What the devil was the matter with Steep and Halpin, anyway?

"My name is really Blackwood," he said. "I am investigating a serious matter in which Miss Mocke appears to be concerned. I'm sorry if I am putting you to any trouble. As for Miss Mocke, I saw her here this morning. I am bound to warn you that it may be awkward for you, if you try to protect her. Is she or is she not upstairs, at this minute?"

The manager shrugged. "Go on up, if you insist."

"Very well, I insist."

Blackwood spun on his heel and stalked away toward the elevators. After an interminable ascent the car reached the eighth-floor level. Blackwood sped along the corridor like a sprinter. Without hesitation he seized the door-handle of Room 827 and entered.

The room was empty. Two bags, however, were still waiting to be carried down. It looked like flight—almost like panic. But had Kitty really gone, or was she even now hiding in another room?

He glanced casually from the window. Damned if he hadn't forgotten to take in his handkerchief!

Then a quick step sounded beside him, almost lost in the pile of the carpet. He was aware of a presence just an instant too late to avoid the smashing blow that fell upon his head. And then there was another.



FORD HALDERNESS

Very quietly Blackwood collapsed upon the carpeted floor, an awkward and ungainly tangle of arms and legs.

WHEN Blackwood returned to consciousness he lay precisely where he had fallen. Outside, the light was waning; but less than an hour had passed.

He rose painfully and staggered into the bathroom, bathed his temples in cold water and looked at his reflection, dimly, in the mirror. Only his hat, it crossed his mind, had saved him from a very serious injury. It stuck a little, now, as he removed it.

At length he ventured on a light. He looked around him. The door of Room 827 was closed, but it was not locked. The bags were gone. No trace of Kitty Mocke remained, unless it were a faint perfume that hung vaguely in the air.

Blackwood was annoyed with Kitty. But was it a friend of Kitty's, or some plug-ugly from downstairs who had cracked his valuable skull?

The light, as he moved, picked out a dark spot on the carpet, and he dropped to one knee to view it at better range. A drop of his own blood, perhaps?

With infinite care, Blackwood inserted a fingernail beneath the little patch of darkness, then gently lifted it. It was a good-sized patch of mud; and as once before, upon an historic occasion, there was a cinder in his center.

Halberd was no longer in the lobby when he descended; and after a moment of indecision Blackwood returned to the Mardena. He found Merkhams preparing to go out.

"Sorry to be a nuisance, Doctor," he apologized; "but I think I've got a nasty crack on the head. I wish you'd have a look at it."

He removed his hat and exposed a tangle of sticky hair. "Grest Scott, Mr. Blackwood!" exclaimed the physician. "What have you been doing with yourself?"

"To tell the truth," said Blackwood, "I was groping under a table, and I came up rather suddenly. I think I must have struck a protuberance."

"You look as if you had been hit with a hammer," said the physician. "Sit down there, over by the light, until I get some hot water."

He examined the wound with skillful eyes and fingers, while bathing it with water. "It's a beauty, all right," he testified; "but I guess it isn't serious. I'll have to cut away a little of the hair. Better keep your hat on if you're going out to dinner," he grinned. "Must have had it on when all this happened."

"I did," said Blackwood.

His head was down; his eyes were fixed upon the floor. Quite suddenly, with a curious thrill, he noted that the Doctor was wearing a pair of brand-new shoes. They were a shrieking yellow, and almost certainly were not the shoes he had been wearing at the Exposition. He would have noticed them before.

Something inside was trying to tell him something. He moved sharply.

"Steady, boy," said the Doctor, as if he were shoeing a horse. "Over in a minute now."

"I see you've bought yourself a pair of shoes," said Blackwood, in a voice he did not recognize as his own.

Good God! Why had this not crossed his mind before? Another doctor—Merkham! Under his nose from the beginning! The man had actually testified as to his movements on Monday night. He had been out until one o'clock or after. That empty morphine-tube—and Kitty's hypodermic! And the first small gob of mud had been beneath this fellow's chair, that morning in the dead man's room.

Merkham was a long time in replying, he thought. "Yes," he said at last, "I stepped in a patch of mud, outside the Fair grounds. The others were a mess. There! That'll fix you up, I guess. Look in again tomorrow morning, and I'll have another glance at it. Take a couple of aspirins, if you've got a headache, and tuck in early."

He stood back to admire his handiwork. "Not at all, old man!" he deprecated Blackwood's thanks. "Glad to have been of service. Good night!"

Chapter Eleven

IT could be! There was no doubt of that. It could be. And what a simple explanation, if that were all of it! Simple and natural—and surprising. But if this were the

explanation, what became of Crotz? Charge off the rest, as just so much coincidence; still the problem of Gene Crotz remained. Had Crotz been quietly eliminated? Why not? And if Crotz, why not poor Trample also?

There was a hitch some place, however. Crotz's life apparently had been attempted once—on board the yacht; but it was not Merkhams who had tumbled the detective into the lake that memorable Tuesday night. Merkhams had not been on the yacht.

At any rate, Crotz and Trample must be traced. Already too much time had been wasted on inquiries that only made the problem harder. And Kitty Mocke must be run down and asked a leading question. One would be enough....

Blackwood had followed the Doctor's orders and turned in early, but he found it impossible to sleep. Finally he gave over the attempt, got up, bathed, and was dressing when the terrier, escaped from its own quarters, came and leaped upon him, wagging ecstatically everything behind its ears.

Blackwood set the puppy firmly on the rug. "Whisky, my son," he said, "go back to bed, and don't wake up the household. Your papa is going out into the night."

He got into a dinner-coat and took a taxi to the Mardena. But Widdowson's usual hideout on the mezzanine was closed and locked, so he ascended cheerily to the Blue Grotto, in search of his familiar.

There was a floor show in progress, and an orchestra was playing lively music. He strolled easily among the tables looking for Widdowson. There had been no sign of him, when he heard himself hailed from the floor, and turning, saw Blaine Oliver and Harry Prentiss twirling slowly with the waltzers. They stabbed with their fingers at an empty table which he had been upon the point of passing. Blackwood nodded and turned back.

PRENTISS and Blaine Oliver gave over their calisthenics after a few minutes, and joined him. Blackwood signaled to a passing waiter.

"Is there any further word of Doctor Trample?" asked Blaine Oliver anxiously.

"Nothing," said Blackwood. "I'm sorry. What will you have to drink?"

"I'm buying this. Don't be silly, Blackwood," said Prentiss. "A highball?"

"Scotch," agreed Blackwood.

"Three Scotch highballs," said Blaine Oliver. "I've become a frightful scot since all this excitement started. Isn't it dreadful about the Doctor?"

"It's alarming," said Blackwood. "I'm fairly dissatisfied with everything that has developed, to date—even my own discoveries. Everybody with whom I talk seems to be protecting himself or some other fellow, and nobody gives a damn what has become of Trample."

Prentiss nodded his head in agreement. He seemed a trifle embarrassed. "Yes," he agreed, "Trample ought to be found. I'd help you, if I could. Miss Oliver and I have talked things over, to tell the truth. We don't blame you, really, for thinking we have been a bit less than frank."

Blackwood grinned. "Miss Oliver has been reasonably frank, I think."

"I know. So have I, generally speaking—but I suppose I can't expect you to believe me, unless I give you my confidence. In the beginning, to be honest, your amateur sleuthing annoyed me. I can't say that I admire it, even now; but because you appear honestly to be trying to save Trample from some sort of a frame-up, I'm willing to make a statement."

"That's swell," said Blackwood, without emotion. "Are you going to tell me that you *did* stay at the Mardena on Monday night?"

"Yes."

"I thought it could only be that. I'm sorry if—"

"Oh, it's nothing I'm ashamed of. But consider the circumstances! I met Miss Oliver in the lobby on Tuesday morning and helped her find the body. Accidental, of course—but who would believe me, if I admitted I had spent the night in the hotel?"

"I stayed here, Monday night, with Frank Steele," Prentiss continued. "We worked late on some plans, had some supper about midnight, and decided to stay in the Loop. And we had a room on the *ninth* floor! On the other side of the house from Trample, as it happens; but

close enough to the whole episode to call forth some pretty nasty questions, after my Tuesday morning adventure. You see?"

Blackwood nodded. It was quite possibly true, he admitted to himself. "And Croz?" he questioned. "You said you knew him. I think you said you had had an unpleasant experience with him."

Prentiss frowned. "That's true," he agreed. "Croz once thought he had caught me cheating on a contract with the city. He tried a little blackmail—offered to 'fix things' for me—and so on. I chucked him out of the office."

A surge of fellow-feeling stirred in Riley Blackwood. "Well," he said, "don't let it happen again. I'm glad I am across you tonight—and I think these are our drinks approaching."

He was in a mood for confidences. Over the highballs, while the music rose and fell, he poured out his troubles. He reviewed the case from its inception. He dramatically concluded by brushing forward his long scalp-lock and showing his honorable wound.

"You see," he shrugged, "I am rather obviously getting too warm, so to speak. Somebody is anxious to discourage me."

Blaine Oliver responded with a satisfying little cry of horror, while Prentiss made encouraging and slightly hypercritical noises over the rim of his glass.

"Just the same," said the architect, after a moment, "I can't help thinking that your latest theory is a trifle stagey, Blackwood. As for the fellow who hit you, at the Jamaica, he might, of course, have been somebody connected with the hotel. You had made yourself rather unpopular, after all. However, I don't really think that. It seems to me the fellow at the Jamaica was helping Miss Mocke to get away. He was somebody that you knew—knew pretty darned well, I should say."

Blackwood nodded. "However, that would be true of everybody whom I have considered, even as a possibility."

"Look here," said Prentiss. "Face the probabilities. I hate to say it—but for the first time, really, I begin to suspect Trample. We all like him—sure—but do any of us really know him? He's disappeared in pretty mysterious circumstances, for an innocent man."

"That's true, of course," admitted Blackwood. "Who would be your alternative, Prentiss?"

"Croz, I suppose. He too has disappeared—and he's a bad baby. He wouldn't want to kill you, either. After all, you saved his life. But a small matter like a crack on the head—"

"He was working for Collingham," demurred Blackwood. "So, in a sense, am I."

"He was, yes! But if I know anything about Gene Croz—and I know a little—he wouldn't hesitate to change sides. Suppose he's working now for Kitty Mocke. Blackmailing her too, perhaps; but still working for her! That tale he told Heviland sounds pretty fishy to me. He wasn't trailing Halderness. Halderness doesn't figure in the case; he just happened to be around while part of it was going on."

BLACKWOOD thought it over. "Your point of view is a fresh one, and valuable," he confessed. "I've got them all so muddled in my mind that I can't separate the sheep from the goats. Still, in the case of Halderness, he was stopping with the Meltons; and Melton was a friend of Collingham; he even identified Collingham's body, officially, for the police. If, just for instance, Melton knew that Collingham was in Chicago, masquerading as Chambers, and knew that he was in possible danger—"

"You mean, if Collingham had told Melton that, for some unimaginable reason, Halderness was out to do him in, Melton would then somehow contrive to persuade Halderness to be his guest, so that—what? So that he could watch him? But he didn't watch him, supposing that to be the case."

"It should be easy enough to settle that," contributed Blaine Oliver suddenly. "The Meltons are here, somewhere, tonight. You know him, don't you, Harry?"

"So he is," cried Prentiss. "We danced past the Meltons, just a little while ago, and I nodded at them. I'd forgotten. . . . Wait a minute; I think they're coming this way now. . . . A moment later; he rose and beckoned; and presently he was leading the banker and his wife up to their table, and making introductions."

"Mrs. Melton, may I present Mr. Riley Blackwood? You know his name, I'm sure. And Mr. Melton!"

Blackwood bowed and shook hands. It appeared that Blaine Oliver had met them, casually, somewhere, after all. It was Mrs. Melton who remembered.

FRESH highballs were ordered and for a time the conversation was general. Blackwood assumed Prentiss had said nothing of the reason for the conclave. But it was inevitable that, sooner or later, the subject would come up naturally; and it did so fairly promptly in a burst of enthusiasm from Mrs. Melton, a large blonde beauty who was middle-aged but still attractive.

"Oh, Mr. Blackwood," she gurgled, "I want to tell you how thrilled I was by your magnificent exploit!"

Even Blackwood was a trifle bewildered. "Magnificent exploit?" he echoed.

"When you rescued that awful man on Mr. Heviland's yacht."

"Oh, that!" said Blackwood. He added: "Well, somebody had to do it, I suppose."

"I was literally frightened to death," she told him. "Mr. Prentiss was with me. I almost precipitated myself onto his bosom. Didn't I, Mr. Prentiss?"

"You did precipitate yourself," said Prentiss grimly. "You screamed lustily, right into my ear." He tenderly caressed the member he had mentioned.

Blackwood took the conversation in hand. "I've never heard how the dickens it actually happened," he remarked. "Where was the beggar, anyway? Perched on the rail?"

Mrs. Melton shuddered pleasantly. "I only heard that awful splash," she said. "My lips tried to frame the words, 'Man overboard!' but no words would come. All I could do was scream."

"Nobody seems to know what actually happened," said Melton. "He was just drunk, and he fell in, I imagine. I saw him a minute or two before the accident. I had just come up out of the cabin and was making my way forward. This Croz was in the little lane—or whatever they call it—that connects the front part and the back part of the yacht. You'll have to forgive my lack of nautical phraseology! Anyway, it's fairly narrow; there's the wall of the cabin and the deck-house on one side, and the rail on the other. He was making his way along, holding onto the rail, when I saw him; going forward, the same as I was. I passed him, and there was just about room for the two of us. The only other fellow I saw anywhere near was your friend, Doctor—what's his name?"

The man who brought him round, after you'd fished him out."

"Trample?" asked Prentiss quickly. "You mean Doctor Trample?"

"That's the man. A big fellow—over six feet, with shoulders to match. Well, he was going back—after what—ever the word is. He must have passed Croz too. Anyway, in about a minute or so there was the uproar from the Duchess of Melton, and I gathered that somebody was overboard."

He grinned at his wife. "The Duchess has remarkable lungs. I fancy they heard her over on the Fair grounds."

The three conspirators were silent. They were considering, each in his own way, the shocking revelation they had heard of Trample's almost immediate presence on the scene.

Blackwood shook himself together first. "Well, well," he observed, "I suppose it will remain a mystery. Not that it makes any difference, now. You didn't know the fellow, I suppose?" He looked at Melton.

The banker shook his head. "Barely exchanged a word with him. One meets some queer people at mixed parties. Halderness was interested in him, somewhat. Thought him an odd type of—'boulder,' I believe the word was."

"Speaking of Halderness," said Blackwood quickly, "just who is he, Mr. Melton—if you don't mind?"

Melton was surprised. "I thought you met him; I thought everybody met him. He's a very distinguished fellow. Fact is," he added, not without some pride, "I'm helping to finance his new expedition."

"Really?"

"Yes, he's off to the Gobi Desert, now, as soon as he can get his party together."

Blackwood had to risk it. "By Jove!" he said. "Isn't that the expedition that Jeffrey Collingham was interested in?"

Again Melton was surprised. "Collingham! I hadn't heard of it. No, no, I think you must be mistaken. I knew Collingham—his recent death was a great shock to me; but while I didn't actually see him before his death, I'm sure I should have heard if he were interested. I can't imagine it. Collingham didn't run much to that sort of philanthropy, I'm afraid."

"I merely thought I had seen something of it in the papers," lied Blackwood easily. "There's been so much about the poor devil in the papers, recently!"

"His suicide was a great shock to me," said Melton soberly. "I couldn't believe it. And speaking of mysteries, there is a mystery, Mr. Blackwood! What was Jeffrey Collingham doing in Chicago, masquerading under another name? He had friends here—I was one of them, and I've run onto others, since it happened. He let nobody know that he was here. The first I knew of his presence was when the papers announced that the body of a man named Chambers had been identified—provisionally—as that of Collingham. I hurried over to the undertaker's place—and there he was. There's something very odd behind that case. And now it develops that his wife was here—an actress—and has come forward to claim his body! His first wife was an actress, I remember. Some men just can't let them alone."

Blackwood shook his head. "It is curious," he agreed. "You didn't know he had married this—what was her name—this Kitty Mockett?"

"Hadn't the faintest," said Melton.

The Meltons presently took their departure. Blackwood was faintly elated: nothing had actually been proved perhaps, but he had a feeling that Melton and Halderness were out of it.

The belated report of Trample's movements on the yacht dismayed him; but it was not final. More than ever, however, it made it imperative that the missing specialist should be found. And he was still not satisfied that Harold Merkhams was outside the picture.

"Look here," he said to his new confidants, "I think we're getting somewhere, at last; but there are still a number of pockets to be explored. I want to see Widdowson, tonight, and talk to him about this doctor of his—this Merkhams. After that, if nothing develops, I'm after Crotz and Horace Trample tomorrow. Have breakfast with me, will you? About eleven?"

Blaine Oliver and Prentiss said they'd be delighted.

"Cheers!" said Blackwood. "Eleven o'clock."

He left them to their own devices and continued his long-delayed search for Widdowson.

The hotel proprietor was run to earth at length in his own quarters. He had left the Grotto early, he explained, with a touch of headache.

Blackwood snorted. Once more he told his dramatic story of his adventure, and displayed his battered skull. "And you talk about a headache!" he concluded. "Well, listen, Tony—I'm not through yet."

He revealed his visit to the hotel doctor and his encounter with the yellow shoes.

"Nonsense!" said Widdowson heatedly. "You're crazy as a bedbug, Riley."

"Science has yet to demonstrate that bedbugs are actually crazy," responded Blackwood. "There are two schools of thought upon the subject, I believe. One group holds that—"

"You're just plain lunatic," continued Widdowson. "Everybody around here knows where Merkhams spends his evenings. He's got a girl. Meffat could have told you that, days ago."

"All right," said Blackwood. "But it's another little job for White, in my opinion. Have him look into it, will you?"

"There are mud and cinders all over Chicago," argued his friend complacently. "I stepped in some myself the other night. As a matter of fact, I believe there's some out back of the hotel at this minute. You might as well be suspicious of me as of Merkhams."

Riley Blackwood grinned. "But you wouldn't hit me, would you, Tony?" he inquired.

"Wouldn't I?" said Widdowson. "Boy! I'm just waiting for a good chance."



COPE HEVILAND

STILL feeling fairly cocky, Riley Blackwood spent a busy Friday morning, or what was left of it, when he arose in his hotel room. It began with a visit from Joseph White, the chief of the hotel's detective staff, who got him out of his bath with tidings of no importance.

"Sorry about that Merkhams hunch of yours, Mr. Blackwood," said White. "I'll look into it, if I can; but I ain't expecting much. The police asked Merkhams a lot of questions on Tuesday morning, you know, after you'd gone away. Put every one of us on the spot, even old Meffat. They wouldn't be likely to overlook anything."

Blackwood thought it extremely likely that they would overlook a great deal. He said so.

"Well," said White, "I'll have a scout around, and see what I can find out. About that Prentiss fellow, though, Mr. Blackwood: I can't get a line on him at all."

"He was here on Monday night," said Blackwood, glad of a chance to score. "He stopped with a bird named Steele—Fred Steele—or was it Frank? Anyway, Steele. So he says! I'm inclined to believe him, but look up Steele on the register and be sure that he was really at the hotel."

"You mean—he's in on this?"

"I mean he probably isn't. But check up on Steele just the same."

When the door had closed behind the detective, Blackwood finished drying himself, wrapped himself warmly in a robe and had a drink. Immediately the telephone rang.

"Hello," roared Blackwood. "Yes—speaking! Oh, hello, Steep! It's you, is it? I was just wondering who you'd get around to calling me."

In point of fact, he had almost forgotten the manager of the "Uncle Claude" company; but he was faintly excited by the call.

He listened and then spoke. "Nothing definite, eh? Nobody saw the man? And that was over a week ago? It's principally Monday night I'm interested in. Kitty was in the cast that night, wasn't she?"

He listened again.

"Well, it isn't much; but it may help. Yes, I've got it. Thanks, old man. I won't forget it, you know. So long!"

He replaced the receiver. Damn Steep! He had probably bungled his part of the job. A big blue automobile might belong to anybody.

He glanced at his watch, finished with his dressing, and went down to join Miss Oliver and Prentiss, who were already in the breakfast-room.

"Well, the Merkhams hunch may yet turn out to be a flop," he greeted them. "He has a girl, it seems, with whom he keeps late hours. Presumably they are known to the night staff of the Mardena. Also, I've heard from the theater. A couple of times, more than a week ago, Kitty was seen to step into a big blue automobile, a block away. Monogram or something on the sides—nobody remembers what. And nobody, it seems, saw anybody at all on Monday night."

"You can't run down the automobile?" asked Prentiss. "Probably not. Only significant thing is that it met her a block away from the theater. That looks like caution, anyway. Well, well!"

They seated themselves and prepared to order breakfast. At once, however, a boy appeared with a telegram for Blackwood. He tore it open leisurely, glanced quickly at the signature, and frowned. After these preliminaries he read the message and made a loud remark. "Well, I'll be jiggered!" cried Mr. Blackwood.

He started to hand the yellow paper to Prentiss, then gave it to Blaine Oliver. Prentiss rose and read the message over her shoulder:

HAVE TRACED DOCTOR TO THIS PLACE STOP IN HIDING STOP NEED ASSISTANCE STOP CAN YOU COME QUESTION.

The place indicated apparently was Davidson's, a town in Wisconsin. The signature was a single letter—X.

"Crotz!" ejaculated Harry Prentiss.

"Undoubtedly," said Blackwood. "Smart, isn't he? Conceals his name, knowing I will understand the significance of X. But why, in heaven's name, to me?"

"Mmm," said Prentiss, after a pause. "But why not, after all? Who else could he ask but the police? He knows you're working on the case."

"How the dickens could he?" I didn't leave my card in his office."

"Well, what's your own opinion?"

Blackwood was still suspicious. "And why the dickens should he need assistance? If he's been after Trample, and now has run him to earth, why doesn't he bring him back? He's man enough for that. Crotz is a tough hombre."

"So is Trample, I imagine, in a scrap," said Prentiss. Miss Oliver had turned a little pale. "Oh, no! I can't believe it," she protested.

"I suppose it could be a trap," said Blackwood cheerily. "How very jolly! Yesterday's adventure wasn't just reassuring. I must be a very dangerous man! Still, if Crotz is in Wisconsin now, he could hardly have been in Chicago yesterday evening—unless he flew. He does fly, come to think of it." He remembered the military photograph in the detective's office.

"I've heard of this Davidson's place, I think," mused Prentiss.

"So have I. It's way up north, near the top of the State. It's a place where tourists detain on their way to the smaller lakes. Tony and I have fished that region."

Their breakfasts arrived.

"How about calling in the police?" asked Prentiss suddenly. "But I suppose that wouldn't appeal to you!"

Blackwood shook his head. "No, this is still my party," he replied. "I couldn't look a mirror in the face again, if I asked assistance from Paddy Croch. No, I'm going to Wisconsin. After all, I don't think that this thing is from Crotz. We're simply being bright. It's our infernal cleverness that interprets the signature in that way. Why, doggone it, it might be from Trample himself! He certainly wouldn't care to sign his name, knowing the police to be after him. 'X' stands for anything we want it to, doesn't it? It's the unknown quantity."

Prentiss agreed. "You may be right," he said. "It hadn't struck me just that way. It may be Trample's way of telling you that he needs assistance."

"Well, I'm going."

"Hang it," said Prentiss. "I wish I could go with you. But I've got to go to St. Louis tonight, for the firm."

Miss Oliver had an exciting idea. "Look here," she cried, "maybe I could drive you there! If Doctor Trample—"

Both men cried out in horror. It was unthinkable, they said. Blackwood, however, gave it a second thought. It might be very jolly!

"I'd love it," he said; "but I'm afraid it's out of the question. Prentiss wouldn't like it; and you'd need so many things, up there in the woods! Stouter shoes and stockings, for one thing. . . . And," he added, "I'll have to hustle. There are several things to do."

Among them, he reflected, when he had left them at the door, was a sort of conversation with Widdowson—and a call to his aunt, to say he was leaving town. He had no notion of disappearing in the Wisconsin wilds, leaving no record of his departure. Already too many persons connected with this mystery had vanished up the capacious sleeve of God. Certainly he would have to have a talk with Widdowson. And he must borrow a car.

HE began another search for Widdowson, who as usual could not be found. Blackwood canvassed the possibilities, and decided to take Heviland into his confidence. In a pinch, the yachtman would be a fellow of some resource. Might even organize a rescue-expedition.

He telephoned to Heviland, who was "in conference," a secretary said. Would Mr. Blackwood hold the wire?

Mr. Blackwood held the wire for a number of minutes; then he was talking to the yachtman with forceful earnestness.

"It's either that blackguard Crotz again," he explained, "or Trample tipping me off to where he's hiding. Either way, I wouldn't miss it for a million. What I'm wanting is some one to know where I've gone, in case I turn up missing. Get it?"

Heviland got it perfectly. "Nevertheless, Blackwood, aren't you sticking your nose into a lot of possible trouble?" he inquired. "After all, there are quite a number of policemen doing nothing in particular."

"To hell with the police!" responded Blackwood. "I think they're spinach. Anyway, the fellow who sent the message may be Trample, and I'm not sicking the police on him, this afternoon."

"Very well," the yachtman answered. "It's your funeral, not mine. But if you need more help, just holler for it. Wire me for anything you need. How long do you want me to wait before I begin to worry?"

Blackwood thought it over. "I'll be up there by tonight, I suppose. Well, give me until tomorrow night, at least, to wire you. If you don't hear from me, get in touch with Widdowson and organize a search-party. Better get in touch with Widdowson anyway, tonight, and let him know what's up. I couldn't find him."

A very workmanlike plan, he reflected as he hung up the receiver. At any rate, he would get a decent funeral! Now if only he could get a good car—

He descended upon Widdowson's garage, where he was known, and selected a heavy roadster he had driven before. In its side pocket, as he drove gayly northward, reposed an ugly blue-steel pistol that he had never had occasion to use. It had been given him by his friends of the Detective Bureau, with instructions on how to handle it in an emergency.

On the outskirts of Milwaukee he refilled his tanks, a matter he had neglected before leaving Chicago. At Hanbridge he paused for refreshments. At Guilder's Green he blew a tire and cursed copiously, to the admiration of a group of the local citizenry. At Simmons' Woods he failed utterly to miss a squawking chicken. At Tophole, he began—or so he told himself—to smell the fragrance of the lakes and forests.

At Harrisburg it suddenly occurred to him that he was being followed. The idea, although not without its allure, shocked him. It froze the song upon his lips.

A big black car of expensive design seemed to be the pursuer. Or was it blue? It was difficult to be sure. Twice before, it occurred to him, he had noticed the thing, looting along just out of hailing-distance behind him. The last time had been an hour ago, on a fairly bumpy country turnpike that he had deliberately chosen because it appeared to be a shortcut. Now he was back on the main road, and here again was the big black car. There seemed to be two persons seated in the front; but it was hard to be certain.

Blackwood slowed up imperceptibly and endeavored to diminish the distance between the cars before his tactics should be discovered. He loosened the flap of the side pocket that contained his pistol. His subtlety was quickly discovered, however, and the pace of the pursuing car fell off. In a few minutes the distance between the two again had widened. Well, there was no doubt of it! The other fellow was certainly on the trail. The murderer, he supposed. The fellow who had hit him from behind in Kitty Mocke's apartment. How very jolly!

Blackwood spoke aloud. "Well," he observed, to test the quality of his voice, "if it's a race he wants, I'll give him one."

He stepped upon the gas. The gleaming countryside of Wisconsin began to flow southward past the roadster like a rapidly manipulated motion picture. He missed a lumbering farmer's truck by an eyelash, and dashed through a country village at terrifying speed. A flash of red he took to be a filling-station.

Three further villages were bisected and left behind. At Easterling he drew rein and again lifted his eye to his mirror; but for some time there had been no sign of the pursuing auto. Relaxing, Blackwood lighted a cigarette and pushed forward without exertion along a road that paralleled the lake. The light was still excellent; there was yet some time to sundown. At pleasant intervals the lake whispered or broke in little smothered of foam along the shore. . . . Would Crotz be waiting him at Davidson's? Or was Crotz behind him in a big blue car?

In the subdued light of early evening he entered Stur-



HARRY PRENTISS

geon Bay and once more filled up his tanks for the final dash to Davidsons. There was no sign of the car that he still believed to have been pursuing him. Some miles ahead, he had ascertained, lay the turning for Davidsons, a relatively narrow trail leading away by imperceptible degrees from the road he was immediately following. It would be necessary to look sharp, perhaps. He slowed the roadster to an easy saunter and turned his gaze inland. The air intoxicated him, and a high sense of elation flowed in his veins—until he glanced into his mirror for the first time, consciously, since he had left the tourist city behind him. He jerked in his seat: a big black car—or was it blue?—was rolling along behind the roadster at a distance of possibly half a mile.

A prickle of apprehension made the circumference of Blackwood's scalp, and another crept up his spine. It was a lovely spot of earth for a murder: isolated, lonely. He pushed his foot down on the accelerator and rushed northward across the State of Wisconsin.

The miles dropped behind; but the big blue car did not. If only he could he sure it wasn't blue!

More miles slipped past; and then, quite suddenly, he glimpsed the turning for which he sought, half hidden in the ragged landscape. He had just whirled headlong around a promontory of trees and shrubs, and for the moment the pursuing car was out of sight.

Blackwood wrenched at the wheel and sent the roadster crashing across a stretch of stubbled turf that was half a ditch and half an entrance to the opening in the forest. The car reeled and righted, skidded by a stump—then darted like a squirrel into the narrower track that pierced the dimness of the surrounding wood. He drove the roadster between two sentinel pines, a natural doorway, into the center of the tangle, and stopped it with a jerk. Then, in a moment, he was out upon the path and running back in the direction of the main road.

Pistol in hand, a sufficiently dashing figure, he hurried toward the turning from the road, and concealed himself behind a patch of leafy shrub.

He was barely in time. The sounds of the pursuing car drew nearer; then for a swift moment it appeared in the openings between the trees.

With eyes that seemed bursting from their sockets, Blackwood saw the heads of Harry Prentiss and Blaine Oliver go jouncing past, behind the windows of a great blue car that missed the opening completely and went spinning northward along the peninsula toward whatever lay beyond.

Chapter Thirteen

RILEY BLACKWOOD went on his way to Davidsons. He was vastly disturbed. That Harry Prentiss should have shown himself a liar and a traitor was, of course, distressing; but that Blaine Oliver should have been a party to the betrayal, as appeared to be the case, was a circumstance that profoundly discouraged him.

Precisely what it meant he had no very clear idea. He was back at the beginning of things, nursing his easy early suspicions of the man who had, in a sense at least, directed the discovery of Collingham's body. And if Prentiss was the guilty man, Blaine Oliver in some fashion must be involved. In that case—

"Damn!" said Blackwood. The whole thing was a headache.

He switched on his headlights as the sun sank over the water beyond the trees. Driving as rapidly as the road permitted, he pushed on toward his destination. Sooner or later the big blue car would learn that it had missed the roadster, and would be back in a whirl of dust. Prentiss, he assumed, was unfamiliar with the geography of the region. They were now upon the peninsula, a long and narrow arm of the State reaching northward for many miles. On the immediate left was the wide body of water known as Sturgeon Bay; some miles to the eastward lay the main waters of Lake Michigan. Even assuming that Prentiss ran the entire length of the peninsula before discovering his mistake, it would be only a few hours before he would reach land's end and come hurrying back. . . .

Darkness had fallen when the roadster entered Davidsons. Blackwood drove slowly through the little tourist town, and suddenly he heard himself hailed. Then in the

darkness a man came striding toward him from the station platform, and he recognized the stocky figure of Gene Crotz; the figure of the man he had last seen sprawled upon a bunk in the cabin of the *Flying Fish*, recovering from his curious accident.

"That you, Mr. Blackwood?" called Crotz again. He came closer to the roadster and peered in, a friendly grin upon his face. "Thought I'd pick you up about here. Sort of expected a wire from you."

They shook hands in the fashion of men who are warily sizing each other up.

"I gathered from your signature that you weren't calling attention to yourself," said Blackwood. He leaned out of the window, the better to converse. The evening air was cold; he was glad there was an overcoat in the rumble.

"Oh, that was for the people at the other end. I knew you'd 'get' it—but I didn't know who else might see it."

BLACKWOOD decided to say nothing, for the moment, about the others who had seen it.

"What's up?" he asked abruptly. "If I understand your wire correctly, you think you've got something on the Doctor."

"Think!" said Crotz. "Boy! I've got them both exactly where I want them! Darned decent of you to come. I wasn't sure you would. I've never even thanked you for pulling me out of the lake."

Blackwood was puzzled. "Both?" he questioned. "What do you mean, Crotz? Who is with the doctor?"

"Who do you think? Kitty Mocke, of course! She joined him this morning. That's why I wired. Up to then I couldn't be positive I had the goods on them."

"The devil!" said Blackwood. His mind whirled. He hung over the edge of the window, staring at the man in the road beside him. This was the most bewildering blow his theories had yet received. What now became of his suspicions of Blaine Oliver and Harry Prentiss? Were they leagued with the Doctor in a conspiracy to protect him against discovery?

He heard the amused voice of Crotz continuing its explanation. "She got here by train this morning. Took a train out of Chicago, last night, I figure, and spent the night at Green Bay. This line is just a spur. Yep, her and the Doctor! All hy their little lonesome!" Mr. Crotz chuckled.

Blackwood couldn't believe it. "Where are they?" he feebly asked.

"Few miles from here. Just a short run out of town in a car. They've got a big stone house in the middle of a tract of virgin forest. Right on the water. I mean, the land is right on the water. The house is back about a hundred yards or two, with a path down to the beach. I was there when the lady arrived."

"In the house?" asked Blackwood incredulously. "No, hanging around. There's a little shack right down on the water—unoccupied. I slept there last night."

"Well," said Blackwood, "it beats me, Crotz!"

Gene Crotz smiled without exultation. "Easy as falling off a chair, Mr. Blackwood. Running people down is my line, you know. Maybe you didn't know!"

"I—ah—yes, I knew," said Riley Blackwood. "But how the devil did you find all this out, Crotz?" he demanded.

"I'll tell you about that as we go along. I want to confront 'em tonight. So do you, don't you? Look here, you'd better park this car of yours in a garage until you want it again. I've got an old flivver I'm using; that's it there, over against the station. And I know the way. We don't want two cars chugging along through the woods. One makes noise enough."

"All right," said Blackwood. There was nothing for it now but to see it through. And he wanted to get away from Crotz for just a minute—long enough to get his pistol out of the car pocket and into his own. God alone knew what was going to develop! "There's a sign up there a piece, across the road," he added. "I'll join you shortly."

Still considerably shaken by the revelations of the detective, he drove off to the garage. On the way he transferred the pistol to his side pocket and smiled a little grimly. After all, Crotz was not exactly a trustworthy animal. On the other hand, there was an infernal plausibility about his story that was disarming.

At the garage he made arrangements to leave the road-

ster until he called for it, removed his overcoat from the rumble, and tramped back toward the railroad station, his mind still rioting. He switched the pistol from his jacket pocket to the right-hand pocket of his overcoat, and decided that he was ready for whatever might come.

"All set?" asked Crotz, as he approached the small car. "Climb in and we'll get started. I've got provisions in the back seat, in case we have to make a night of it."

"Precisely what do you intend to do?" asked Blackwood, when they were started. "Even supposing that you've got the goods on Trample, you don't expect him to break down and confess, do you?"

Crotz removed both hands from the wheel recklessly and lighted a cigarette. The spurt of flame in the darkness lighted up his hard face and the ironic smile around his mouth.

"Why not?" he retorted, tossing the match overboard. "Catching 'em together is as good as confession. They'll know that. Oh, they'll talk! I'll see to that. But I needed a witness with me when it happened, see? I don't want any talk of rough stuff, later on."

Blackwood persisted in his cross-examination:

"What is your own interest in all this, Crotz?" he demanded abruptly. "I don't quite see where you come in. For whom are you working?"

Crotz chuckled in the darkness. "Kitty Mockett I know," he answered. "I'm still working for her husband. Oh, yes, he's dead! But what's the dif? He hired me to do a job for him, and I'm no quitter. There aint any mystery about this case, Mr. Blackwood; there hasn't been any from the beginning. It's an open-and-shut case. The Doctor was playing around with Kitty Mockett, and Collingham got wise to it. It's the good old recipe for murder. He was a jealous bird—always worried about his wife when she was away on tour. Fellows like that oughtn't to marry actresses; but somehow they always do. Anyway, he hired me to get the goods on them, and I got it. We got it—Collingham and me, together. That night—Monday night. I suppose you know that I was in Kitty's room, that night, don't you?"

Blackwood laughed. "Yes," he admitted, "I did discover that. I knew you and Collingham were both there; and somebody else too."

"Sure—and that somebody else was the Doctor. He was there first. We knew he was there. I saw him go upstairs, and Collingham spotted him in the room, with a pair of binoculars that he'd brought along. There wasn't any doubt about it. We scooted across the street, took an elevator, and crashed the party." Crotz laughed appreciatively at the recollection. "They was a bit surprised," he added gently.

"Collingham knew the man was Trample, all the time?" asked Blackwood. "When he met him, first, in the Mardena?"

"He was pretty sure, yes. So was I. I'd been working on the case for some time. Trample didn't come to Chicago, that day, or the day before. He came right after Kitty Mockett came with her company. He was at another hotel for a time, that's all. I knew where he was."

The plausibility of it all was undeniable, Blackwood admitted to himself. "What happened at the Jamaica, that night?" he questioned.

"Well, we bust in on them, as I say, and like to turned the Doctor's hair gray. Kitty didn't give a damn, at first. Told Collingham to go to hell and get his divorce, if he wanted it. But the Doctor wasn't pleased at all. He had a reputation to think about, I suppose. First thing he did was deny there was anything between them. He said everybody knew it was all right for a doctor to be in a room with one of his patients. We just gave him the grand razzberry. Later he tried to talk us around. Kitty telephoned for liquor, but we didn't wait. Collingham had seen enough, and so had I. He said he would get his divorce, and we walked out on them."

WELL, it all checked beautifully with what Blackwood had himself discovered. After all, the bellboy might well have believed Collingham and Crotz to have been "excited."

"And you suggest that later Trample followed Collingham back to the Mardena and murdered him—put morphine in his liquor?"

"It was easy enough," said Crotz. "Kitty's a dope, you know—not a violent one; but she takes the stuff occasion-

ally. Trample was getting it for her. He had some in his pocket, I suppose. He left Kitty and followed Collingham back to the hotel, had another interview with him, and dropped the stuff in the whisky-glass when Collingham wasn't looking. It would look like suicide, he figured—and it damn' near did!"

"You weren't there yourself, during the interview?" "No, I'd left Collingham outside the Jamaica. But later I thought of something I wanted to ask him, and I went back. It was a little after one o'clock—and Trample was just coming out of Collingham's room. He didn't see me. He was hanging a card on Collingham's door-handle."

"Good God!" said Blackwood. "You saw that, and yet you didn't—"

"Butt in? No, and I'll tell you why. Of course, I wished later I had. I was suspicious as hell, even then, but there wasn't any proof that anything was wrong. I was afraid Trample would see me; so I turned and beat it downstairs. Then I called Collingham on the telephone—and got him. He sounded a bit thick, and he admitted he'd been drinking; but he seemed to be all right. He told me he'd just got rid of Trample, who'd been trying to buy him off, and that he was going to bed. There it was, you see! What could I think? It seemed funny, his asking the Doctor to hang out that ticket; but he must have done it."

"I see," said Blackwood thoughtfully. "He was trying desperately to find some flaw in the detective's statement. What an idiot he had been, himself, not to inquire of the switchboard about calls to Collingham's room in the early morning hours! 'The exchange of rooms went through just as Trample told us, I suppose,'" he continued.

Crotz shrugged. "I don't know exactly what Trample told you," he replied; "but they certainly did exchange rooms. That was earlier, of course. Trample didn't know Collingham by sight, and he fell for the story Collingham told him. It was a fairly lousy one; but the Doctor's something of an ass, after all."

BLACKWOOD chanced a shot in the dark. "Does Harry Prentiss or Miss Blaine Oliver know anything about all this?" he asked suddenly.

But Crotz's voice was blank. "I don't know them," he answered. "Where do they come in, Mr. Blackwood?"

"Damned if I know," said Blackwood, a bit hopelessly. "Anyway, it's easy to see why you're on the trail. Where did you pick the Doctor up?"

"Well, as soon as Collingham's body had been found, I knew who had killed him," said Crotz easily; "but of course, I couldn't prove it on his front teeth. I thought the police would get Trample and drag it out of him, as a matter of fact—his story was such a wild one—about that exchange of rooms, and so on. When they didn't, I knew it was up to me. I picked him up on Wednesday, after his damn' convention, and I've followed him ever since."

"Then it was you that got into a cab with him, a little after noon on Wednesday."

Crotz's harsh chuckle grated against the darkness again. "So you know about that, do you? It was me, all right. He knew me, of course—and of course he got the idea that I was after him. That's what made him duck, I suppose. We rode into the Loop together, and he tried to pump me about what I knew or suspected. Pretended to be cut up about Collingham's 'suicide,' as he called it; and blamed himself for being the cause of it. Very frank and open, on the surface, you know? Naturally, I wasn't telling him anything. Well, after I left him,—as he thought,—he took another cab and lit out for a railway station. I followed him, and—here we are!"

"So it was Trample you were trailing on the yacht."

"Sure it was. And I'll solve another little mystery for you, in case it's troubling you: It was your friend Trample who pushed me into the lake. If it hadn't been for you, I might be there yet. I owe you one for that."

"Don't think of it," said Blackwood politely.

Damn the fellow! He rather wished he need not bothered to pull him out that night. They left the little city behind them and swung out into the open country. For several miles the car rattled and bumped along the uneven surface, and the trees as they approached the denser darkness of the forest became taller and more numerous. The car rounded the corner of a darkened farmhouse and clattered westward; then again it turned to the north and entered ultimately into

a patch of woodland heavy with the scent of pines. The moon was up; but its light was pale and ghostly among the trees.

Crotz stirred and spoke. "We're coming to the entrance to his land before long, now. It isn't really his, I suppose. I don't know how he came to find the place; that's something we've got to find out. It's black as hell inside the woods, but the road ain't so bad. I've got a place where I leave the car, about a mile inside the grounds. Then there's another couple of miles on foot, and the road twists and turns like a snake; but the general direction is northwest all the time, until you hit the water."

"I should imagine it all belongs to some friend of his," said Blackwood. "He must have known about it before he took a train."

"He knew about it, all right," said Crotz. "He headed for it like a homing pigeon. It's a wonder Kitty ever found the place."

"How did she find it?" Blackwood was suddenly curious.

"Fellow at the station drove her up. She must have had directions. I suppose it has a name. I haven't asked any questions in the town, yet." Crotz peered ahead of him in the light thrown by the headlights of the car. "Right about in here, I think," he added.

He was now peering off to the left. "Yep, that's the place," said Crotz; and Blackwood was able faintly to see a trail that led inward among the trees—a trail that vanished in a darkness that seemed comparable to no other darkness that he had ever known.

In a moment, however, the lamps were lighting it for progress. The car bumped over some fallen branches, lurched for an instant into a rut, and popped into the opening among the trees. Blackness surrounded them immediately, save where the headlights shone on bole and branch.

Crotz was looking for the little clearing among the trees where he had found a parking spot. In the reflected glow of his cigarette, Blackwood saw the hard lines of the detective's mouth and jaw. He noted that Crotz was freshly shaven.

"How did you know that Trample was going to be on board the yacht?" he snapped. "He didn't know it himself until an hour or so before he went."

The car stopped with a jerk.

"Here we are," said Crotz, without emotion. "Hop out, Mr. Blackwood. I'm going to douse the lights in a minute."

Blackwood opened the door beside him and stepped out upon the earth. Crotz ran the car into the clearing and himself dismounted.

"Another thing," said Blackwood. "How the devil did you know I was working on this case, Crotz?"

"I went back to my office on Wednesday," answered the detective. "After you'd been there and turned my papers upside down. That's one way I knew. You just weren't smart enough."

"I was in your office on Wednesday afternoon," said Blackwood. "It was fairly late. At that time, if I understand your earlier statement, you were following the Doctor."

The situation had come up suddenly. He realized that he had forced the issue. It occurred to Blackwood that this had been a quite courageous thing to do, in view of the fact that very shortly, in all probability, he might be murdered.

"The two stories don't exactly click," admitted Crotz. The headlights still burned upon the tree-trunks. In the semi-darkness there was an evil grin on the detective's face. "Why, damn you," he added, "do you think I asked you up here for a picnic in the woods?"

They faced each other at a distance of six feet or less. The stocky tough stepped forward.

"Look here, Blackwood," he said. "There's one way out of this, if you'll listen to reason." He came in closer. "It's this!"

His right fist came up from somewhere near his knees. Blackwood leaped back, and watched him totter with the force of his wasted effort. Then, as the detective straightened, he stepped swiftly forward and kicked him accurately in the abdomen—a foul blow, below the belt.

Crotz wilted and collapsed upon the ground, writhing and groaning. It seemed to Blackwood that there was a look of shocked surprise on the detective's face, in addition to his expression of great pain. But it seemed to him also that Crotz was reaching for his pocket.

He brought out his own pistol and smashed the detective across the forehead with its heavy butt.

When it was certain that Crotz was quite motionless, he strode to the decrepit car and hunted furiously among the odds and ends that littered the back seat. As he had hoped, he found a length of fairly good rope, and with it tied the detective hand and foot, in what he trusted was a competent and workmanlike security.

Nothing, he supposed, that Crotz had told him was now to be believed. He stood alone, in the heart of a Wisconsin forest, and considered his position. What would happen when Harry Prentiss and the jolly little Oliver came cantering back along the highway, to resume the trail?

Very softly, Blackwood whistled a bar or two of the "Habanera"—a grand melody—while he made up his mind.

He stooped to Crotz's body and frisked it. An old police revolver, but a good one, came out of the back pocket of the trousers. Obviously the detective had not cared to fire it, or by this time Riley Blackwood might have been a dead man. The inference was that there were people in the neighborhood who might hear a shot, and Crotz had reached for his weapon only in an emergency. . . . There was nothing else of interest in the pockets—a disappointing circumstance.

He returned to the car and rummaged further in the back-seat bazaar. Cheers! This was what he needed—an electric torch! He had been a chump not to bring one along himself. But Crotz had lied about the provisions—an awkward situation.

Well, Crotz wasn't dead, anyway. His heart was still pumping. He probably weighed plenty; but it would be a Christian act to get him into the car before turning him over to the authorities.

Mr. Blackwood tugged and swore and copiously perspired. At length, after great toil, he hauled and boosted the unconscious man into the car, and covered him with a blanket. Then he reached into the front seat and snapped off the staring lamps.

The night was black as the devil's riding-boots. Queer noises sounded around him in the darkness—the groaning and sighing of the trees and the leaves, and stranger sounds that he could not interpret.

He snapped down the button of his electric torch and strode boldly along the twisting trail that led, he had been informed, to an old stone house in the middle of a forest.

Chapter Fourteen

TREES that are only trees by daylight are many and various other things at night. They are lurking, impossible monsters of the animal world, or crouching human ruffians, of ferocious aspect and intent.

In the city, Blackwood's nerves were sufficient to their purpose, but here he had a number of bad moments. Once he nearly shot an inoffensive stump that sprang at him without warning.

The old stone house, Crotz had said, lay yet another two miles along the twisting auto road. It seemed imperative to ascertain whether it really existed. If it did not, the Babes in the Wood had nothing on Riley Blackwood.

The borrowed torch picked out the irregularities of the trail with fair precision. Its narrow beam skipped on ahead, revealing sudden stones and branches, pine cones and fallen acorns and startling growths of fungus, patches of green moss, and now and then a stagnant pool of water.

For half an hour he cautiously progressed. Then it seemed that in the distance he could hear the sound of long waves rolling on a pebbled beach. He glanced upward and beheld a star. In a moment there was another. The trees were thinning out; patches of sky were visible between their tops. He snapped off his torch and faintly saw the trail beneath his feet. He pushed forward with



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greater caution—and came almost suddenly upon the house.

It was an ugly and misshapen edifice, with a jail-like quality about it that eluded definition. Two stories in height, for the most part, it fronted on a terraced lawn that ended in a grove of young trees, beyond which, at some distance, he sensed the presence of the water. At front and back a wide stone porch was screened with heavy ivy. A single turret, square and hideous, presumably looked out across the treetops to the bay.

Blackwood made a stealthy circuit of the house and grounds, keeping inside the fringe of trees. In an upper room, at the front of the house, a light burned dimly. The blind was only half drawn, and a curtain stirred in the light breeze of evening. By climbing to the top of the stone porch, it occurred to Blackwood, he might be able to see within; but the prospect of this activity filled him with no enthusiasm. The living-room presumably was immediately below. He crept closer, then with a little rush crossed the lighted lawn and concealed himself in the shrubbery that lay beneath the windows. Above him something gleamed upon the window-pane, and he assumed an open fireplace on the far side of the chamber. He dragged himself up the stonework of the porch and, leaning outward, looked through the lower window into the living-room beyond.

There was an open fire, as he had deduced; and sitting before it was a woman. Apparently she was alone; most of the room, however, was in shadow. The woman was Kitty Mocke.

Blackwood scuttled back to the relative security of the trees, for this was something he had to think about. Crotz, in this one particular, at any rate, had told the truth. The immediate question was obvious: was Trample also in the house?

"The Emperor Napoleon used to say that attack was the best form of defense," mused Mr. Blackwood.

But in spite of the Emperor Napoleon, he decided against any move too rashly suicidal. He sneaked away among the trees, and once more bent his footsteps toward the water. It was at least conceivable that the Doctor was a prisoner in the house, if nothing else; and there were points in the story told by Crotz that could still be checked. There had been some mention of a shack, down near the water, where the detective had pretended he had spent the night. Trample, if he were a prisoner, might even be hidden in the shack.

But why the devil should he be a prisoner? It was a new idea, with attractions of its own; but if Trample was a prisoner, who the devil was his captor? Crotz alone? Prentiss? Prentiss and Crotz together? And what was Blaine Oliver playing in a drama that starred also the ampler dimensions of Kitty Mocke?

SOMETHING inside Blackwood again seemed trying to tell him something. But the message stopped somewhere just short of articulate thought. He shrugged and decided to risk a cigarette. At a safe distance he brought forth his torch and studied his position. He was in a grove of trees less dense than that through which he had journeyed to the house; and a few paces to the right there was a curving trail that apparently led to the water.

He reverted to darkness, pocketed the torch and stepped out into the path. At every step the hiss and murmur of the waves were clearer, and when he had passed beyond the last fringe of trees, he saw the dark expanse of water. Some distance to the north, against the white shine of the beach, a roomy cabin squatted. He stepped back again into the shadows of the trees to study it.

No light shone from the windows of the shack; there seemed no movement anywhere. If nothing happened, he decided, in a few minutes he would go forward and investigate. Crotz, at any rate, would not be there to spring upon him.

Crotz. It had been an hour, at least, since he had tied the detective with his own rope and left him in the old car. There was small likelihood, he fancied, that the fellow would be discovered—even by Prentiss, if miraculously he ever found the trail. By this time possibly

Crotz had recovered consciousness. If so, he would be thinking dark thoughts of Riley Blackwood. Mr. Blackwood was just a bit complacent.

The distance to the cabin was not to be accomplished in a sudden sprint, such as he had made across the garden. It was close to a hundred yards, he figured, and the stretch of turf he must cross was bathed in starlight. What a target he would present to anybody of a homicidal turn of mind! There was only one way to do it—light a cigarette and stroll down there as if he had been born upon the place.

But with the cigarette halfway to his lips, he paused and listened. Through the trees that lay between him and the big stone house he sounded faintly the accents of a motor—the unmistakable suggestion of an arriving car. More faintly still, he thought he heard the sound of voices.

He retraced his steps along the curving path by which he had descended to the water. In the distance a tiny light was moving through the trees.

Again he caught the faint echo of voices—men's voices, he was certain. But neither light nor voices came from the precise direction of the big stone house. They were farther to the north. The light was moving slowly. He pushed forward at what speed he dared—and almost instantly fell headlong into a patch of creepers.

At the same instant, it seemed to Blackwood, a shot rang out ahead, at a distance that he could not guess. He scrambled to his feet and stared wildly into the darkness. The light was stationary now, and lower down. Apparently it had been set upon the ground. The voices had ceased.

Blackwood swore bitterly, and stumbled forward among the trees. He had lost the trail, he realized, some minutes before. In the circumstances he dared not risk his torch.

But as he groped toward the distant spot of light, it took wings. It rose from the earth to about the level of a man's dangling hand and continued on its course—in the direction of the house. With sudden philosophy Blackwood leaned against a tree and watched it go.

For ten minutes he stood in blackness, listening; then quietly he moved forward again among the trees. The light had vanished. There was now no sound of car or voices. The rustle of the treetops and the whisper of the water was a part of the silence of the night. Twice he ventured a quick spurt of guidance from the torch, then pushed on doggedly. What had been the meaning of the shot that he had heard? Was it Prentiss who had arrived by car, just before he had heard the voices?

The moonlight, after a time, was brighter; he was approaching another and smaller clearing. Vaguely he sensed a small white structure of wood. It was a garage, of course. There was certain to be a garage. A car had arrived, and two men had come from the garage, carrying a light.

He stumbled into a narrow road of earth and stone, faintly outlined in the moonlight. As he did so, his foot struck into something solid that lay across the path, solid yet yielding.

A shudder shook him. There was no possible question what the object was; it was a human body.

For a crawling instant Blackwood stood very still and listened to the hammer of his heart. Then he pushed down the button of his torch and looked.

It was the body of a man, face downward among the sharp white stones. The body of Gene Crotz! There was a bullet-hole in the center of his back, from which a little flow of blood still oozed, staining the light gray jacket that he wore.

Blackwood turned the body over, with horror and reluctance. The battered face looked up at him. He had made no mistake. This was Gene Crotz, and he was quite, quite dead.

In sudden panic Blackwood retreated to the beach. It was clear that somewhere in the grounds a murderer was at large. He crossed the stretch of lighted turf with shaky strides, his pistol in his hand. But it seemed unlikely now that there was anyone lurking in the cabin. It seemed to Blackwood that Crotz's murder still further



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bore out the story he had told, and that the place was really deserted.

The cabin was quite empty. It was a dusty place, two rooms, in depth, with another room at one side, overlooking the water. His investigation was rapid. Littered with old newspapers and magazines, and old fishing tackle, with here and there an ancient hat, the shack was without clue of any sort. The hats were simply old sun-straws, purchased, he fancied, in the neighboring town. There was no record in the dust of Croz's earlier occupation. Blackwood left the musty place in haste.

On all sides the cabin was bordered by a shingle-covered veranda, falling to decay. At one corner stood an antique deck-chair, from which it was possible to command a view of the opening among the trees that marked the pathway to the house. Blackwood fell into it with relief. At least, he could not be taken unawares.

He was more weary than he had realized. Small wonder, as he came to think about it! The trip itself had been a grind. And the murder of Croz had shaken him more than he was willing to admit.

Blackwood marshaled his suspects and his arguments, and passed them in review before him. Trample, from the constabulary point of view, was still the favorite. He fulfilled all conditions; he was the perfect solution. Poor old Trample! Prentiss, in view of his most recent conduct, was a problem without an answer; but a very likely candidate for handcuffs, either as principal or associate. Prentiss was being just a little too smart.

Croz was in many ways the key-piece to the puzzle, and Croz was dead. But Croz, who at the beginning had represented Collingham, at the end had represented some one else. This was significant.

It seemed to Blackwood that he was overlooking something vital. Damn! He marshaled his clues and found them surprisingly inadequate. Discouraged, he peered at the illuminated dial on his wrist. In spite of everything, it was as yet only ten o'clock. Around him lay a singing silence, a silence made up of the myriad small sounds of night and lapping water. It was a soothing melody. He lay back in his chair—and in five minutes was asleep.

WHY had Croz been killed?

The question was in his mind as he awoke. Something else had awakened him, however. He sat up stiffly. His pistol, of course! It had slipped from his lap to the veranda. He recovered it with alacrity and stood up, wide awake.

If Croz had told the truth about Kitty and the Doctor, then it seemed probable that it was Trample who had killed him. Who else, save Kitty, could there be? In that case, the car he had heard had been not Croz's but the Doctor's. He had found the detective in the woods, released him, and brought him up to the house to murder him. It seemed to Blackwood an unnecessary journey.

But if Croz had lied about the Doctor, there was only one reasonable explanation: Croz had been killed because he had failed to murder Riley Blackwood. Croz, part of the plot that had lured Riley Blackwood to Wisconsin, had freed himself and driven to the house, and he had paid the penalty of his bungling.

Once more Blackwood peered at his watch in the semi-darkness. He had been asleep not quite an hour. To sleep at all had been a criminal offense, however. It was now eleven o'clock.

He stepped from the veranda to the turf, then stopped in amazement. A chime of bells was ringing across the water.

Ship's bells! But there was no vessel on the water. No light save that of a distant lighthouse, winking from the mainland, miles away across the bay.

Something labored in his brain. Eleven o'clock—and a set of bells had just struck six. It reminded him of something else. Somewhere, recently, this had happened before.

Then abruptly his mind functioned, and he recalled the circumstance of which he had been reminded: The little clock in Kitty's chamber at the Jamaica—the morning he had stood outside her door and knocked. It had struck six when his watch informed him it was actually eleven. He had wondered how she ever got to the theater.

Something even then had puzzled him, but he had not stopped to tease it out. At the moment it had been unim-

portant. And when he had got into the room he had not noticed it.

The secret of Kitty's clock was now explained. It was a clock that struck a ship's bells instead of ordinary hours. The coincidence was interesting. *Damned interesting!*

With a shock of dismay Blackwood saw his case spread out before him. It took his breath away. What an inconceivable idiot he had been!

Little matters that had troubled him fell into place with clicking sounds that he could almost hear. His mind raced. Prentiss? Croz? No wonder Croz had been murdered! No wonder the Doctor had been kidnapped! He must actually have seen that first attempt. Melton's testimony had placed him squarely in the passage at the time that Croz went overboard. Prentiss too must have suspected something—tardily. But Prentiss was in no danger unless he reached the house before Riley Blackwood could get back. It was possible that Prentiss was not himself suspected.

He strained his eyes across the waters of the bay. There was no vessel within sight or sound. To the southward, and close at hand, a long dark promontory of wooded land jutted out into the water, concealing the shoreline beyond. Behind that barrier, he had easily assumed, lay miles and yet more miles of fir and pine and barren, rocky beach.

With long strides Blackwood set off across the flat; after a few minutes he began to run. But in a little time he entered into trees again and had to pick his way with caution. For several hundred feet he struggled through patches of alternating light and darkness, guided only by the vague sound of the water and his own sense of direction. Then he was on the long ridge of the promontory, looking through the last barrier of trees at the scene which lay beneath him.

It was a miniature harbor, complete with dock and pier; and at the landward extremity lay a smart new boat-house. Moored at the dock was something long and white that gleamed in the moonlight, marked by a little light that danced and dipped with every movement of the waves.

There was no other moving object within view.

Blackwood laid his hand against a tree and breathed heavily. For a moment he almost babbled. "What the—what—the devil is the meaning of this?" he all but cried aloud.

He scrambled down the intervening hillside, with fear in his heart, and emerged upon the dock. New revelations were clamoring in his mind. But even from the ridge his eyes had not deceived him.

The motor-launch was trim and graceful, and saucy as the young woman for whom she had been named. Her hull, in the shimmering starlight, was white with a broad band of black. The curve of her stern and prow was as familiar to Blackwood as the lobby of a theater. He had sailed upon her many times.

She was the *Charming Sally*, out of Belmont Harbor, Chicago, and Tony Widdowson was her owner.

Chapter Fifteen

HURRYING stealthily toward the big stone house, by the new path that he had discovered, Blackwood again was easy in his mind. For a number of terrifying moments the shock of his original revelation had been overwhelmed by the greater impact of that sudden sight of Widdowson's launch. Now he was coldly angry.

No doubt, with a little ingenuity, he could invent a case against his friend that would appear as damning as the case against the Doctor. Certainly Widdowson had had the opportunity to murder Collingham; and motives are easily imagined. Even the thought, however, was arrant nonsense. It was almost comic. And Widdowson had no wild estate in primitive Wisconsin.

No, the case was solved; it had been solved by that silver chime of bells across the water. Odd how little it required, at the last, to oil the wheels of intellect, reflected Riley Blackwood, a trifle immodestly. And it was ironic that the ultimate clue should be a clock on Tony Widdowson's launch.

As if to clinch his solution, there came back to Blackwood a casual sentence dropped by Widdowson, in conver-

sation, some weeks before. They had taken the *Sally* to the Fair grounds for a look at the new splendors.

"There's only one man in Chicago with whom I'd trust her," Widdowson had said, meaning the launch and not a woman.

This was a reckless business on which he had now embarked, thought Blackwood. He might be shot while crossing to the house. There could be no doubt that some watch was being kept for his appearance. The miracle was that he had not been trapped and murdered, down there beside the water.

Kitty was in it pretty deeply, he supposed. And Trample—what of Trample? Already murdered, perhaps, and buried in this wilderness of trees! It had been Crotz who had done the job, of course—Crotz who was now dead and damned, himself. It had been Crotz who had kidnapped Trample at the Fair grounds and hurried him, on some pretext or other, to the harbor. Almost any story would have done. It had been Crotz whom Merkhams' friend had seen with Trample, stepping into the cab.

That telephone-call? A relay! A smart trick, that. The murderer, of course, was already in Wisconsin. And he—Riley Blackwood—had unsuspectingly held the wire! It sickened him to realize how the fellow had lied to him. And how he had fallen for all those lies.

Oh, yes! It was all simple enough now. The invitation to the party—a ruse to find out what, if anything, was suspected. And again the irony of things, that Trample should have gone along. Even the patch of mud now found its little aperture in the completed picture. The grounds around the harbor were full of it—and cinders too.

Blackwood hurried through the last patch of trees and halted at the margin of the lawn. No feeling of nervousness now bothered him; his pistol lay loosely in his grasp.

The firelight still leaped upon the pane. Upstairs the bedroom light still burned. And cool as was the night, Riley Blackwood's overcoat was beginning to discommode him. He slipped it off and left it among the trees.

Then very quietly, for fear his knees should crack, he lowered his long body to the earth. But at the very instant that he began his crawl a faint sound struck upon his ear. It was as if it had been carried in telegraphic waves along the earth against which he lay. Somewhere he had heard or read that such things happened. He laid his ear along the ground and waited.

Nothing!

The sound was repeated, and this time he raised his head and heard it without difficulty. A faint, metallic sort of sound, somewhere over among the trees to his left. Near the garage perhaps. Near Crotz's tower. Such a sound perhaps as a spade might make, striking against a stone, when it was plunged into the earth.

Blackwood rose painfully to his feet, and with excessive caution he moved in the direction of the sound. Some fifty yards beyond, a lantern was set at the edge of the path; and in a miniature clearing, in the shadow of the trees, a man was digging a grave.

The body of Gene Crotz still lay across the path, where it had fallen.

Blackwood turned softly and retreated toward the house. Now, he reflected, was his time—or never.

HE crossed the lawn with rapid strides, but without sound, and mounted to the porch. The doorknob turned easily beneath his hand. He closed the door behind him. In a darkness lighted only by leaping flames upon the hearth he looked at Kitty Mocker. Her eyes were wide with stupefied amazement; her knuckles were at her mouth.

"One yip out of that beautiful mouth of yours," said Blackwood in a pleasant, low-pitched voice, "and I'll knock you for a row of ashcans, Kitty. Where is Doctor Trample?"

Her reply surprised him. "Thank God you've come!" said Kitty Mocker. "I thought—" She stepped forward and laid a hand on his arm.

"What?"

"I thought you had been killed."

With a cynical smile he reassured her. "That shot, you mean? I see! No—that was Crotz, passing to his reward. He is now in process of being buried."

"Dead?" she whispered.

Blackwood's smile broadened. "That's why he's being buried." Then he snapped at her: "Where is Doctor Trample?"

"Upstairs," she answered. "I've been—I've been nursing him."

"Oh, yes?" said Blackwood. "I'll look into that in just a minute."

"He was hurt," she told him, "when he was brought here."

"How does it happen he wasn't killed?" he asked her brutally. "Are you lying to me, Kitty? I warn you—I've had enough of that."

She shook her head. "Don't be a fool! I'm telling you the truth. I'm glad you've come. I didn't think anyone would ever find us. I thought I could see it through alone—but I can't. My own life is in danger. I feel it! Don't you see? I suspected too! I've been trying to get proof."

He shrugged skeptically. "You might have saved yourself a lot of agony if you'd taken me into your confidence."

"You wouldn't have believed me. You were so sure that I was guilty too. I was sorry to have to lie to you, so much."

THERE was some truth in the reproach, Blackwood inwardly admitted. But he was certain that she was guilty now, for that matter. She was still a very creditable actress.

"You came up here with Crotz and Trample—"

"And with him too," she interrupted. "He borrowed Mr. Widdowson's boat; nobody suspected him but me. I didn't know the Doctor had been injured; I didn't know he was in the boat until I saw him. I thought we were just going some place till things blew over. I wanted proof."

"Why did you think Trample was being kidnapped?"

"I know why he was kidnapped. That night—in my room at the Jamaica—Jeffrey Collingham, my husband, swore he had told Doctor Trample all about it."

"About your affair with Heviland?"

The actress did not falter. "Yes!"

That was it, of course. Collingham had lied, in self-protection. Trample had known nothing at any time. But it was a miracle that the Doctor was still living—if he really was.

Blackwood glanced swiftly to the window. How long, he wondered, did it take to dig a grave?

"All right," he said. "I'm going up."

He blundered to the staircase, looming dimly at one side, and clattered upward into darkness. It was possible that Kitty was telling the truth at last, he reflected; but there were still a lot of things requiring explanation.

The gravedigger might return at any instant. A touch of "Hamlet" in the wilderness! He touched his side pocket, in which his pistol lay ready. The corridor, at the front, was thinly lighted by the low gleam in Trample's chamber.

He tiptoed to the door and peered inside.

"Who's that?" a voice asked swiftly—with sudden fear. Blackwood could have wept. That the arrogant, courageous doctor should have been brought to this!

"It's Blackwood, Trample—don't get excited." He went quickly to the bedside.

"Good God!" The Doctor's head rose from the pillow; the bed creaked sharply. "I almost shot you!"

Blackwood was astonished. "You've got a pistol?"

"A little thing." The Doctor was apologetic. "It isn't a pistol. Miss Mocker's, I think. She gave it to me to-night. That girl's all right. By George, Blackwood, but I'm glad to see you! What the devil—"

"I'm afraid there's not much time for talk," said Blackwood softly. "Heviland is just outside. He's digging a grave for Crotz—perhaps for all of us. He didn't see me. I could have killed him."

"He's murdered Crotz?"

"Shot him in the back," said Blackwood crisply. "Look here, Trample! Can you move?"

Horace Trample sat upright in his bed. "Of course I can move. We've been fooling him, you know. He thinks I'm going to die. It's all that kept him from murdering me when we arrived this morning. They carried me to the house."

"Saving himself another murder," said Blackwood thoughtfully. "My God, what a situation for a man of

Heviland's reputation! The public thought he was a saint. It was that that drove him to it, of course. He didn't want to murder anybody in the first place, I suppose. What's the matter with you, Trample?"

"Just a crack on the head. We've been pretending that I've got a concussion. I've learned to be quite an actor." Blackwood walked over to the window and peered out into the night. Over among the trees he could just see the twinkling spot of light from the murderer's lantern. He came back to the bed.

"You'd better get into your clothes—if you're sure that you can make it. We'll want to get away from here. I may have to kill Heviland. You saw him push Crotz overboard, didn't you?"

"Yes, I saw him." The Doctor, a little shaky, was endeavoring to put on a pair of trousers. Blackwood steadied him. "That's one reason I'm here," continued Trample. "Also, he thinks that poor devil Collingham told me a lot of stuff the night we changed our rooms. He was afraid I'd talk, and he would be accused of the murder. He still insists that it was suicide." The Doctor sat down, and Blackwood handed him his shoes. "I can only say that he took a queer way of persuading me."

"It couldn't have been suicide, of course?" said Blackwood. "We can prove it on him, can't we?"

"Oh, it could have been, all right—but it wasn't! Crotz had the goods on him. Pity he's dead; but I've picked up enough to know the situation. Crotz was blackmailing him. Saw him come out of Collingham's room, that night, and hang that damned card on the door. Of course, he says Collingham asked him to."

Blackwood nodded. "I think we've got him, between the three of us," he agreed. It pleased him to know that the had been correct in his own diagnosis of the ingenious tale spun by the detective in the woods.

He gravitated to the window again, and flung a question over his shoulder.

"You're sure of Kitty, are you?"

"She's on the square—now, at any rate. She's sure he killed Collingham, and she hates him. She came up here to prove it on him, when she thought no one else suspected."

"His whole course is a confession," said Blackwood. "He hired Crotz to kidnap you, and later to murder me. That didn't come off, and so he murdered Crotz himself. I've no doubt you and Kitty would have followed." He shrugged. "He'd have done better to stand the gaff in the beginning. He has children, of course—but it's better to be a co-responder than a corpse. And he's either got to die up here—or burn."

The Doctor was walking softly about the room, a trifle groggy.

"My head swings a bit," he said; "but I think I'm all right, Blackwood. What do we do now?"

"Keep that popgun handy, and back me up in case I need help."

"And what do you do next?"

"Damned if I know, exactly," admitted Riley Blackwood.

For the last time he moved to the window and looked out into the darkness. The little light among the trees had vanished.

A moment later his question had been answered for him. From the stair-foot came a cry from Kitty Mocke: "Look out! He's coming!" And at the same instant Blackwood, standing beside the window, heard the sound of footsteps on the stone porch below. Then he heard the door opening.

WARILY they tiptoed from the bedroom to the corridor and listened. The voice of Cope Heviland came up the dark stair-pit from the living-room. It was brisk and almost cheerful.

"Well, that's the end of Eugene Crotz," the yachtsman said. "One down, and two to go! Oh, don't be scared! I had to kill him, Kitty, or we could never have gone back. That crazy devil Blackwood is still somewhere in the woods. I hope he breaks his neck. What bothers me is, I'm afraid he may have gone for help. Look here, Kitty—I want to get away from here tonight! Good God! I thought we'd have some privacy up here." He laughed harshly. "Privacy!"

They heard her little cry of protest. "Tonight?"

"Sorry," said Heviland, "but it can't be helped. The

launch is ready. I've just been down there. What about the Doctor? Isn't he ever going to die?"

"He's—holding his own yet, I think," said Kitty Mocke. She was acting superbly. Blackwood felt a little like applauding. "Shall I go up again?" she asked.

It was too good to last.

A board creaked under Trample's foot; and Blackwood moved swiftly to the stairhead. Heviland's voice had changed.

"Who's that?" he asked. "Damn you, have you been fooling me? He started for the stairs, and she attempted to intercept him; but he threw her roughly to one side.

Blackwood moved slowly down to meet him. "Get back, Heviland," he ordered easily. "Get back, damn you! Stay exactly where you are. I've got a pistol on you—and you can't see me. Put your hands over your head and walk out into the room."

A roar of laughter swept up the stair-pit.

"By the great hornspoon, it's old Riley himself!" cried the yachtsman boisterously. "I might have guessed it! But how the devil, Riley, can I stay exactly where I am and still move into the center of the room?"

Blackwood was annoyed. "If you don't put up your hands and start," he answered viciously, "I'll shoot you dead as hell, Heviland. I mean it!"

The yachtsman slowly raised his hands until they were on a level with his ears, and moved into the firelight. "All right, all right," he protested good-humoredly. "But I don't know what it's all about. What next, old man?"

BLACKWOOD finished his descent, closely followed by the Doctor. At sight of Trample, Heviland's brows pushed upward. He shot a savage glance at Kitty Mocke. "Yes," she said serenely, "I fooled you about the Doctor too." She walked to Horace Trample's side and took the little weapon from his hand. "I'll help you keep an eye on this murderer, Mr. Blackwood," she finished easily.

"May I sit down?" asked Heviland. The question was abrupt. Without waiting for permission, he dropped into a chair. "Of course, I know what all this means," he added in conversational tones. "You think you've got me for the murder of Jeffrey Collingham—Kitty's husband. You're crazy, all of you. Collingham committed suicide. I went to him, that night, it's true, and tried to talk him out of bringing suit. It would have ruined me—with the reputation I've had as a reformer and philanthropist! He was courteous—he understood my point of view—we even had a drink together. But I couldn't move him. He wanted a divorce, and that was that. I went away, and next morning he was found dead. He probably finished the bottle, after I left him, and decided that suicide was the easiest way out for everybody."

The yachtsman spread his hands and looked about him with an appearance of great frankness.

"He finished the bottle, all right; we noticed that. I am willing to believe that the morphine was in the bottle, instead of in his glass." Blackwood was speaking quietly. "Did your husband ever use morphine, Kitty?" he asked.

She shook her head. "Never! It was I. I hate it, but—sometimes I have to have it. He used to get it for me, Cope, I mean. That's how I knew that it was he who—" "That's simply nonsense," interrupted the yachtsman impatiently. "He had the stuff himself, that night. It's easy enough to get, when you know how. To tell the truth, I thought he got it from Doctor Trample. He'd often thought of suicide—he told me so. I think he tried to implicate Kitty; that's why he chose morphine. He was pretty mad at her, you know. He blamed her more than he did me."

Blackwood shrugged. "And because you thought you might be accused of murder, if it were known that you were in his room, you were willing to let suspicion fall on Doctor Trample? Pretty! But Crotz knew all about it; and you were paying him to keep his mouth shut. He had a bigger hold on you than ever, after you'd thrown him overboard. You paid him to kidnap Trample and to murder me. After you'd failed, yourself! Or did you try to kill me, yesterday afternoon, in Kitty's room, when you were making ready to escape? I give you the benefit of the doubt. But it was you who hit me."

He caught the actress' little gasp, and realized that she had not known of the episode in her apartment. She had been hiding, probably, in another room, after the manager had given the alarm.

He continued with his charge: "At any rate, it was you who murdered Crotz; and you would have murdered the Doctor—if you hadn't thought that he was dying anyway. You would have murdered Kitty too, after you'd got rid of all the rest of us!"

He finished his indictment with sparkling eyes. "Well, it was a large order, and an ambitious one; but you haven't got away with it. I'm almost sorry for you, Heviland—but baby, you're going to the Chair!"

Suddenly he smiled. "It may interest you to know that it was the sound of that little clock of Kitty's—the one you gave her, I believe?—that put me on your trail."

Heviland rose and yawned. "I've no doubt that you've been very clever, Blackwood," he sneered. "Two and two make five! But as it happens, I can prove everything I've said. I have a paper here—"

He reached a hand into his inner pocket, and Kitty Mocke screamed loudly.

Her ridiculous .32 cracked just an instant before Heviland's larger weapon; and the heavier lead plowed a furrow in the baseboard. Heviland's arm dropped helplessly at his side, and his pistol thudded to the floor. The yachtsman clutched at his wounded arm—then, almost before they were aware of his intention, he bounded for the door. The next moment he was outside clattering down the stone steps to the lawn.

Kitty Mocke was staring at her weapon in astonishment; she was suddenly aware that it had been discharged. Her accurate shooting might have been regarded as miraculous, if she had had any notion that she had pulled the trigger.

Blackwood, still clutching his pistol and cursing wildly, was hurrying across the lawn in hot pursuit of the escaping murderer, followed at some distance by the heavier Trample. But Heviland was already out of sight among the trees. Somewhere ahead they could hear the disturbance of his running. He was racing down the dim trail toward the water.

The dramatic critic of the *Morning Chronicle* emerged upon the dock in time to see the white arrow that was the *Charming Sally* shoot out into the bay, with motors roaring. She was headed eastward into the mystery of black and silver waters. Dimly, in her stern, by the somewhat confusing radiance of the moon and stars, he thought he saw a dark figure crouched behind her engines. The trail of the little launch upon the water was foaming white, a vivid spectacle. The staccato uproar of her motors persisted long after she had passed from sight. . . .

It was some minutes later that Horace Trample came pounding down the pier. He had been delayed among the trees. He found his friend and rescuer staring across the water, lost in meditation.

"Good Lord, Blackwood," cried the Doctor. "Did the fellow get away?"

But Blackwood only shrugged.

"I don't suppose it really makes any difference," he replied, at length. "He can't go any place in safety, once the telephones get busy. I was just wondering if he wanted to."

After a time he said complacently: "Confound it, Trample! Do you suppose I ever will learn how to use this damn' gun?"

Chapter Sixteen

"FUNNY thing about Miss Oliver and Prentiss," said Widdowson a few days later. He spread a fragment of toast with marmalade, looked at it with appreciation, and popped it into his mouth. "I should think they'd have looked us up, at least, to say hello."

Riley Blackwood's newspaper was propped against a sugar-bowl. He had been reading a brief notice, written

THE END

by himself, about an English company of Shakespearean actors that would shortly descend upon Chicago. His opinion of the company was not high, and a headline for his first review was beginning to form in his mind. "Hams Across the Sea—" and possibly something about a barbecue.

"Oh, no," he answered after a little silence; "they've been seen enough of all of us, I fancy, to last them for a lifetime. They were fairly disgusted with me by the time we met them in Davidsons on Saturday morning. They'd been hunting for me half the night—trying to rescue me—and were almost annoyed when I showed up safe and sound!" He laughed. "Prentiss's sudden hunch that Heviland was the trouble-maker was a daisy! It almost converts one to a belief in the fallibility of scientific detection. Simply because Crotz had been on Heviland's yacht, and he didn't like Crotz!"

"It was decent of him to set out after you," said Widdowson.

"In a big blue car? He scared me half to death! Why the devil couldn't he have hired a white one, if his own was blue? Why the devil didn't he catch up with me, and tell me what was in his mind? But no—he just wanted to keep an eye on me! Didn't want to alarm me, in case he might be wrong. Alarm me! That's all he did do."

WIDDOWSON laughed. "Well, his hunch was better than mine. I thought Heviland was going to your assistance, when he borrowed the *Sally*. If Crotz had killed you, he'd have pretended to be sorry he hadn't got to you in time. But where the dickens do you suppose he had the Doctor hidden until Thursday evening? Trample was certainly kidnapped on Wednesday."

"On his own boat, of course. He simply brought the launch alongside and made the transfer. Crotz was in charge. None of them reached Wisconsin until Friday morning, when Crotz sent his telegram. When I phoned Heviland on Friday,—like a blinking idiot,—he was already up there. I held the wire while somebody in his office relayed the call. I don't know whether I'm proud of myself or not, Tony. At any rate, you'll get the launch back. Even if Heviland has gone overboard, somebody'll pick it up."

"I saw Trample last night, for just a minute, by the way," said Tony Widdowson. "He isn't going back to New York immediately. Kitty's shipped her husband's body on, and I suspect she and the Doctor will go back together. What do you think of that?"

"Good Lord!" said Blackwood. "Not really?" Still, it might be quite a decent thing for both of them. Trample could cure the lady's appetite for drugs, perhaps—and if he couldn't, he could get them for her. As for Trample, he really needed some sophisticated person to look after him.

"It's not a bad idea, Tony," he continued aloud. "I'm really very fond of both of them. I hope you're right."

"Oh, I'm right enough," said Tony Widdowson.

For a few moments Riley Blackwood continued to think about it; then he returned to the fascinating pages of the *Chronicle*.

Suddenly he sat erect and stared.

"Well, I'll be jiggered," he said, "if Prentiss and Blaine Oliver aren't going to do it, too! Her picture's in the paper."

"Get married?" asked Widdowson. "Well, I suppose that was inevitable. They've been thrown together in some curious circumstances. And people will get married."

Mr. Blackwood sighed. Blaine Oliver had been a nice little thing; he had really liked her quite a lot. Once he had thought—Presently he got out pencil and an envelope and began writing down some clever phrases for the article on the Hams Across the Sea.


Next month: New Dealers and Old Dealers, diplomats and lobbyists, Senators and code-makers, sweet-mannered vamps and hard-boiled virgins—all in "A Woman of Washington," a complete book-length novel by Cornelius Vanderbilt, Jr., who wrote "A Farewell to Fifth Avenue."



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